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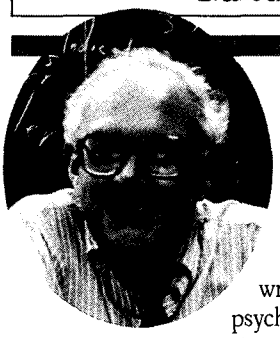

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Herbert Hill is Professor in the Department of Afro-American Studies and in the Industrial Relations Research Institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Widely recognized as a leading authority on race and labor, he served for many years as National Labor Director of the NAACP.

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The Role of the Intellectual

Murray Hausknecht

The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation of Milwaukee, which recently became one of the wealthiest philanthropies in the country, has selected an executive director to develop a public-policy program in support of conservative causes.

The new director, Michael J. Joyce, has been director of the John M. Olin Foundation of New York, whose research grants have helped writers and economists widely regarded as influencing Reagan administration policies. . . . [Irving] Kristol, who holds a chair in social thought at New York University endowed by the Olin Foundation, welcomed the Bradley Foundation's decision about Mr. Joyce, adding, "I think it's great after the liberal Ford, Carnegie and Rockefeller foundations, people of a conservative point of view will have a large foundation to help them in studies, research, enterprises or whatever."

— *New York Times*, September 26, 1985

The intellectual is a modern phenomenon. I do not mean that there was no intellectual work before the modern era; rather, in other times intellectual work was not undertaken so self-consciously or as a task justifying one's existence. Now it is a distinctive calling that revolves about a critical stance toward ideas. "Critical stance" means—and there is little or no disagreement in the discourse about intellectuals—an analytical or intensive examination of the structure and bearing of ideas and other products of the human imagination. But "critical stance" also implies for many, at both ends of the political spectrum, that the intellectual is "one who thinks otherwise" (Lewis Coser) or one who adopts "an adversary position" (Robert Nisbet). Some would push the idea even further: an intellectual *must* be in opposition to the dominant traditions of the society.

• That conception of the role, however, overstates and obscures the relationship between the intellectual and the rest of the society. The adversary position is a result of the critical stance itself and not necessarily a consequence of the intellectual's choice. To be analytical, to go beyond merely stating and advocating ideas, demands a problematic approach to the world. Analysis starts with a question, and the intellectual in pursuing his vocation is *obliged* to make the world problematic, his (or her) own as well as others'.

When questioning the world the intellectual automatically becomes, in Coser's words, "a disturber of the peace"—questioning the fundamental premises underlying beliefs, values, and behavior as well as specific ideologies and programs. The intellectual becomes an "enemy" because unexamined commitments are foundations of social structures of privilege and power—the intellectual is a subversive force within the society. Whether an intellectual *chooses* an adversary position is irrelevant; in the eyes of others the critical stance puts him (or her) in opposition.

This is not to say that the intellectual is detached from the social structure or above social conflicts. Like everyone else, he is buffeted by social currents that shape his thoughts and actions. The difference between the intellectual and others lies in the imperatives of his vocation: where others are under no obligation to make their own ideas problematic, the intellectual must question his own beliefs as well as theirs.

• The role always requires an awareness of one's own social interests. Many intellectuals, however, are "committed"; they consciously choose to support a given set of ideas and lend their talents to furthering specific interests that align them with some groups and not others. The committed intellectual is eagerly sought after, but honored less for the nobility or elegance of his thought than for its ideological utility.

There is, typically, an element of wariness in the welcome extended to the intellectual. For his critical stance means that the gates may be opening to a Trojan Horse; the perspective that provides ideological weapons against a group's enemies can be turned against the group itself. So the social position of the intellectual is an ambivalent one; he is

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embraced because his vocation allows him to articulate and defend group interests, but at the same time he is treated with reserve and suspicion because he is predisposed to question the world enfolding him in its ranks. Thus, censors and cultural commissars.

• The intellectual's calling is not without its psychological strains. The critical stance is an alienating force on social relationships; the intellectual's social ties are founded upon the very taken-for-granted values and beliefs that he is making problematic. People become noticeably cool to those who begin to reflect a different set of political beliefs and social attitudes. These same beliefs and attitudes are the foundations of a person's self-image; that is, they define a person as a person to himself. The critical stance, therefore, disturbs not only the social peace but the psychic equilibrium of the intellectual. All of this creates a constant temptation to blunt the edge of the critical stance in order to preserve relationships and contain the ravages of anxiety.

No intellectual wholly resists these temptations; an intellectual who responded unreservedly to the obligations of the role would be a social and psychological monstrosity. In everyday life the imperatives of the intellectual vocation are inevitably modulated by those rooted in the needs of a human being.

• The role is also tempered by the specific commitments an intellectual chooses to make. There is a difference between those who become committed to the dominant traditions and groups and those who adopt "deviant" ideas. Among the former I exclude "intellectuals"—the quotation marks are important here—who use their talents only to gain material rewards. All modern societies, democratic and authoritarian, have their share of hacks and cultural apparatchiks. It is perfectly possible, however, to find intellectuals in democratic societies such as ours who are committed to the institutions of capitalism. At this time it is easy to confuse the two groups because the financial support both can muster is different from the financial resources now available to those on the left. The committed conservative intellectual has relatively little difficulty, for example, in finding support for starting so inherently risky an undertaking as a new journal of opinion. The conservative intellectual is not only welcomed but generously embraced.

Generosity goes beyond money. As a defender of existing traditions and institutions, the intellectual easily reaches a broad and significant audience. He becomes a person of some influence, a "powerful voice" sometimes heard even in the councils of the mighty. The respect and deference he receives reinforce his position in the existing structure, so that his relationships with individuals and groups become more firmly fixed.

• The point becomes clearer if we recall that the intellectual is analogous to Georg Simmel's stranger. "The stranger is an element of the group itself . . . an element whose membership within the group involves being outside and confronting it." He represents "a union of nearness and remoteness" because "he examines conditions with less prejudice; he assesses them against standards that are more general and objective. . . ." Just as the objectivity of the stranger contributes to his "remoteness," so too the critical stance of the intellectual acts as a centrifugal force on his social position. But for the conservative intellectual, his commitments pull him toward the center of the established order, as do the welcoming arms of dominant groups. The stronger the embrace of the conventional world, the more difficult it becomes to question it.

THE POSITION of the conservative intellectual can become similar, paradoxically enough, to that of some committed intellectuals of the left. During the '30s and '40s there were intellectuals who came into the orbit of the Communist party, found audiences and financial support through its publications, and soon lived their entire lives surrounded by other CP members. In this sectarian setting it was impossible to pursue their calling.

In such encapsulated worlds an essential ingredient of the vocation—intellectual discourse—disappears. Discourse means the exchange of opinion, the clash of imaginations; it demands a response to other voices. It is intellectual discourse that helps give and maintain an edge to the critical stance; without discourse the mind becomes merely a repetitious, self-confirming mechanism. The intellectual journal is one channel through which other voices can be heard so that discourse can thrive. But CP journals were open only to those who stayed within the prescribed limits of the party line; those who deviated could not be heard. Though there are no cultural commissars policing today's journals of conservative thought, the often-noted predictability of opinion in *Commentary*, for example, indicates a similar absence of discourse and drift toward sterility of thought.

These are, of course, not unknown dangers of commitment. There is a tradition of wariness, a

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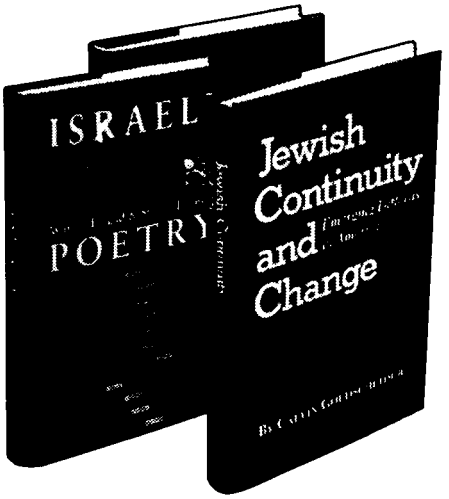

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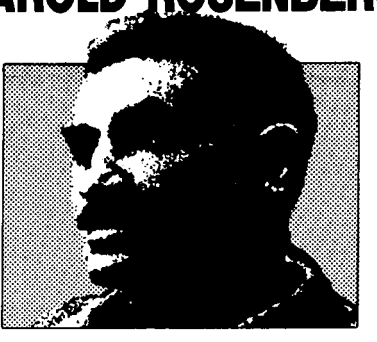

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Robert Lekachman

The Debt Balloon

Analogies both tempt and mislead. Still, it is hard to avoid recalling the merry 1920s, the last occasion when international and domestic credit stimulated pundits to project endless prosperity premised upon ever-rising stock prices. Roger Babson saluted Hoover's victory in 1928 as a veritable warranty of good times as far as the prophetic eye could see. In retrospect, it's quite clear what first inflated and then pricked the credit bubble. The Versailles peace treaty imposed upon defeated Germany an enormous reparations burden. As Keynes memorably warned in his classic polemic *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, protectionist barriers to German exports, loss of Lorraine's iron to France and Silesia's coal to Poland, and expropriation of the loser's entire merchant marine made it utterly impossible for the Germans to produce and sell the exports needed to pay the victors. And as Keynes presciently added, the vindictiveness of Versailles imperiled the stability of the infant Weimar republic.

Not to worry. Americans happily invested billions of dollars in German bonds. The Germans transferred the proceeds to French, Italian, Belgian, British, and other claimants. For their part, the French and English promptly met installments due on the vast sums they had borrowed to win World War I. So long as American infatuation with dubious German paper endured, all debtors paid up and all creditors were euphoric. Toward the end of the decade, as all good things must, the charade ended. In this country, Florida real estate, much of it better suited to alligators than humans, and stocks and bonds attracted the greed of folks with loose cash, particularly since anyone could play the market on ninety-cent margins. As soon as Americans stopped buying German securities, the Germans defaulted on their reparations payments, the European victors suspended service of their debt to the United States, and the paper inflation collapsed along with the dreams of affluence of many thousands of deluded speculators. The New Deal partly revived the American economy, and that most wasteful of public works projects, World War II, completed recovery and during the 1950s and 1960s assured American economic and political hegemony over a devastated Europe and Japan.

Henry Luce's American century lasted barely a generation. OPEC's price coup in 1973–74 transferred vast resources from oil importers to oil exporters, notably Saudi Arabia, a desert land blessed with few inhabitants and virtually limitless oil reserves. A nasty combination of inflation and unemployment afflicted the United States and Western Europe—stagflation, in Paul Samuelson's coinage. But ingenious financiers worked out a saving solution. The Saudis and their co-conspirators deposited tens of billions of dollars in American and European banks. The gung-ho bankers eagerly pressed their new loanable funds on the Zaires, Perus, Brazils, and Argentinas of the globe. The managers of these fragile economies shipped the sums they borrowed back to OPEC, less the sums they deposited to their own Swiss numbered accounts. The process came to be known and loved by financial types as the recycling of OPEC earnings. A second OPEC coup in 1979 hyped the transfers.

If the rest of this decade appears increasingly like a disaster waiting to happen, it is because the recycling process displays ominous signs of unraveling. For starters, OPEC has lost control of oil prices and oil production, so that, according to the analyst one reads, a barrel of oil may by the end of 1986 sell for as little as fifteen dollars, some 40 percent of its peak of thirty-six dollars. Those tens of billions of dollars no longer flow from OPEC and non-OPEC oil producers. American and other

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banks have less money to lend to Third World oil importers at just the moment when even the oil producers among them, notably Mexico, are strapped for funds and teetering on the edge of default. The best that Treasury Secretary James Baker has been able to suggest is new loans to Latin American and other borrowers so that they can pay the interest on earlier loans and avoid outright default on their debts. No sensible financier is tactless enough to mention repayment of principal.

To descend to the anecdotal, two or three years ago I happened to be a guest along with Felix Rohatyn on William F. Buckley, Jr.'s "Firing Line." I idly asked Rohatyn whether Citibank, Chase, and the other Manhattan money market banks would not be bankrupt if they were compelled by the Federal Reserve and other regulators to value their dubious foreign and domestic loans at some approximation of market value. Rohatyn cheerfully agreed that in such an eventuality all of the major banks would register negative net worth, which is jargon for liabilities larger than assets. However, he quickly added, Paul Volcker and other establishment types would never allow a major New York bank, or, as later events confirmed, even an important Chicago bank to go belly-up. In other words, the analogy between the 1980s and the 1920s falters because our financial leaders remember with proper apprehension the consequences of the debacle of the 1930s and exercise their considerable capacities of invention and deception to keep the rickety structure of debt more or less upright.

STILL, THE NUMBERS are oppressive. The bull market of 1985 testified in good part to the spendthrift propensities of even affluent Americans. In the third quarter of that year, Americans saved just 2.5 percent of their after-tax income, a record low. The thrifty Japanese regularly save between a fifth and a quarter of their paychecks. Consumer debt as a percentage of anything you care to compare it with —Gross National Product, disposable income, or consumer assets—is at a record high. Small corporations swallow much larger enterprises by issuing junk bonds, more courteously termed high-yield securities. The Third World owes the First World something over $1 trillion, give or take a hundred billion or so. Our domestic farm debt exceeds $500 billion and family farms are becoming anachronisms in the wake of a surge of foreclosures. Corporate debt exceeds $1.5 trillion.

The numbers glaze vision. In that circumstance probably inheres the prospect that somehow the economy will stagger through 1986, possibly even 1987 with the more important players in the major financial games able somehow to shore up faltering banks, lend new money to Third World debtors, and avoid a default on the part of either a major foreign borrower or an important domestic financial institution. All the same, one must wonder how long this game of financial chairs can continue before the music stops. An outright Mexican default, for example, would set off a chain reaction of similar repudiations in Latin America and elsewhere. With the best will in the world, the Federal Reserve could not protect several leading American banks and simultaneously preserve investor and corporate confidence. When the most casual of observers is aware that the bulk of Third-World debt will never be repaid, the best that can be expected is that the United States and Western Europe, in cooperation with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, will cooperate to forgive much, most, or all of this debt over a period of years long enough to avoid mass default on the part of either borrowers or lenders.

FEW SIGNS OF SUCH WISDOM are visible on the political horizon of 1986. Capitalism is a tough system. Its operators are superior con artists. They not only fear repetition of the Great Depression, but they have evolved techniques of cooperation unknown to earlier central and commercial bankers. Nevertheless, the conclusion is inescapable that in one fashion or another the sheer magnitude of domestic and international debt will prove insupportable. There are two ways to repudiate debt. A country or a corporate borrower may simply refuse to pay, or lenders may inflate their currencies to allow of apparent payment of debts in currency worth diminishing fractions of the initial value of debts incurred. In 1985, the Federal Reserve increased the money supply by 12 percent and the value of the dollar against other major currencies declined. Still larger expansion of money and credit will diminish further the dollar's value and facilitate repayment of external debts in money worth far less than it was when the loan negotiations were initially completed. Of course, the domestic accompaniment to such a policy will be a revival of the inflation that plagued the economy in the late 1970s, expelled Jimmy Carter from the White House, and bestowed upon America the dubious blessings of the Reagan administration.

The crash of the 1980s will both resemble and differ from that of the 1930s in ways that I shall not endeavor to guess at. It is exceedingly difficult to see how it can be avoided, for it is no easier now than it ever was either to ride a tiger or dismount from the beast. □

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Patricia Cayo Sexton

The Epidemic of Homelessness

In response to a segment on the homeless, a TV anchorperson recently quipped, "Well, that's the price of progress!" Those who had tuned in to this Reaganite oneliner (an ideological relative to the old Stalinist quip, "You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs") expressed their outrage to the network; but then it was the Yuletide, and popular sympathies had made a seasonal turn to the Tiny Tims and the down-and-out.

Once past this crisis, New York—and many other cities—entertained less charitable thoughts about the homeless. Some citizens, assuming people must be crazy to want to live in the streets, asked, "How can we get them back in asylums?" Some wondered if maybe the idle and the streetwise were again feeding at the public trough.

Unfortunately, the homeless cannot, as some propose, be easily returned to their last address because in many cases *we* are living there now. During the 1970s in New York City, for instance, 81 percent of Single Room Occupancy units (SROs) were lost. By now very few are left. In that same decade, close to a million SROs were lost nationally, a figure perhaps close to the number of homeless nationally—though estimates range from 250,000 to three million.

About 25 years ago, looking for a cheap place in New York to stay briefly, I discovered the SRO, a sleazy space to house, or hide, the city's not quite dispossessed, yet an address and a room of one's own. Not many years later I almost bought an SRO, one of the Upper West Side's brownstones into which the public was pouring millions in low-interest loans and tax-exempt treatment in an effort to gentrify those sleazy spaces. It was a brilliant concept—for the city and the new owners. The house I almost bought for $60,000 may be worth a million or more now, enough to buy decent, lifelong shelter for all its former roomers. The roomers, of course, lack any share of this publicly-subsidized explosion of wealth. Many of them now live under bridges, in abandoned buildings, emergency shelters, subways, bus terminals, cardboard boxes, plastic bags—and lack even a mailing address.

So the feds and the right have not pushed people into the streets without some help. We city folks and liberals, know it or not, also had a hand in it, and some of us have made handsome profits from gentrification, a fact to consider when the time for atonement rolls around.

Nor can the feds be blamed wholly for pushouts from state hospitals of hundreds of thousands of mentally ill. That was chiefly the work of the American Civil Liberties Union and other concerned liberals who admirably opposed the forced confinement of the mentally ill but neglected to alert us to their new "freedom" to freeze on the city streets. Lending the lawyers a hand were doctors and other high-level professionals who said it was okay to give the sick their pills and set them free, whether or not community-based care was available and with no reason to suspect the sick would or could use the care if it were offered.

As for the feds, in 1985 the House Committee on Government Operations issued a concise summary of the causes of the homeless crisis and the federal government's response to it. The causes, it says, are scarcity of low-income housing, deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill, unemployment, cuts in federal assistance programs, and personal crises.

A housing crisis unmatched in this century looms over the homeless, says the National Governors' Association, and one governor, New York's Mario Cuomo, traces the crisis back to the impounding of federal funds in 1972, adding that SROs and moderate- and low-income housing have been wiped out and replaced with condos, coops and luxury housing of all kinds, so that it is now uneconomical to build moderate-income housing in the state. To date, Reagan's only response to the governors' pleas for housing aid has been a proposal to sell off to the highest bidder the Federal Housing Administration, one of the best friends the average under-housed person ever had in Washington.

Meanwhile, cities contend with the exorbitant costs of low-income housing ($60,000 for an average two-bedroom Housing Authority unit in New York City). But perhaps if as much ingenuity were applied to this crisis as to the city's gentrification,

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these costs might be cut and owners of existing housing might be tempted to convert to SROs, families with space to take in roomers and boarders as families once did, and new impetus given to creating European-style bed-and-breakfast establishments, and more communal and dormitory-type living spaces. New approaches to group and family living might relieve pressures on the housing market.

Between 1955 and 1980, the inmate population of state mental hospitals, what with pushouts and tightened admissions, shrank by more than three-fourths, from 559,000 to 138,000, despite increases in the total U.S. population. And fewer than 800 of the 2,000 or so community centers needed for the newly released actually materialized. Having known bedlam, many ex-asylum patients now prefer the streets. And many do *not*, but have no choice.

Who is "Crazy"?

ABOUT 50 PERCENT of the homeless are said by the National Institute of Mental Health to have severe mental disorders, but then a study of midtown Manhattan not too many years ago found that nearly half of the comfortably housed had some diagnosable mental disorder. So who's crazy? The answer seems to matter most to those whose reductionist tendencies point to only one problem, insanity, and one solution, reinstitutionalization—a concept as hard to type as to apply.

Some homeless, about 10 to 15 percent of the total, are afflicted only by personal crisis—divorce, abuse, poor health—and will usually find new shelter. These are not the hard-core homeless, but like many of us, they could be.

The biggest problem for many homeless is that the feds these days are far more reluctant to giveth than to taketh away, and their strong preference for the latter has driven many out of their housing if not their minds. In 1984 the poverty rate in the nation was 14.4 percent, down from 15 percent in 1982, but up from 11.4 percent in 1978—an increase from 24.5 to 33.7 million poor. A major source of this increase was, according to the Census Bureau, the tightening of eligibility standards for various government programs.

As a small example, in the winter of 1982, a 61-year-old former psychiatric patient was found dead in a cardboard box on a New York City street. She had lived there for eight months after her entitlements were cut off when she failed to appear for reexamination.

Many people in shelters say they are there because benefits they once lived on were cut or terminated; and nationally about 300,000 people, many of them mentally ill, have been dropped from Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) on reexamination of eligibility. For those homeless who are too disabled to have worked at all, the complaint about SSDI is its exclusion of people without work histories.

The mentally ill are eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), but find it hard to apply for or manage benefits. As for food stamps, the sheltered are deemed institutionalized and hence ineligible for stamps, and those living on the streets have no place to prepare food and hence are also ineligible. Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) is for families, not singles. Medicare is only for the aged or for disabled workers, and state Medicaid often depends on eligibility for AFDC or SSI, which exclude many homeless. Numbers of homeless could qualify for these entitlements, but they need a mailing address and a lot of help to do it. The programs are filled with cracks and catches.

Federal spending for social programs in 1985 is said to be about $38 billion less than it would have been had not budget cuts been made in 1981. These cuts alone may have pushed some 587,000 more people into poverty . . . and many of these out into the street.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) could, of course, be most helpful to the homeless because it alone among federal agencies could provide low-cost housing. Congress in 1984 authorized $60 million annually for HUD homeless aid, but HUD opposed the program and funds were directed instead to the one special federal program for the homeless, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which sponsors no housing at all. HUD's low-income program, moreover, was cut from $1 billion in 1975 to about half that by 1983.

Half of homeless males in cities like Los Angeles and Phoenix are veterans. A third in New York City (about 10,000 men) are vets but only 17 percent of these receive VA benefits, even though most could qualify for pensions, state veterans' homes, domiciliary care, community care, and medical treatment. They need help to get it.

FEMA, the first national program to aid the homeless, has been funded with only $70 million yearly for the whole country. New York City alone spent more than $217 million on the homeless in 1985. In 1984, then-Secretary of Health and Human Services Margaret Heckler sent 25 modest suggestions to Reagan for helping the homeless,

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but the White House has neither responded to the report nor adopted any of its suggestions. The chair of the committee, a Dr. Vieth, said he had not even read his committee's report. The major suggestion of the report was for an Executive Order to direct federal agencies to give top priority to and expand their efforts on behalf of the homeless. No blood has issued from those turnips.

HOMELESSNESS IS A NATIONAL EMERGENCY, a growing problem. Between 1982 and 1983 alone the number of homeless increased by 38 percent. As for hunger, the fraternal twin of homelessness, demand for soup kitchens has risen steeply. In over half the programs, demand rose 50 percent in a recent two-year period, and in Harlem it rose 1,250 percent. New York City now has about 350 operating soup kitchens. The city predicts that its shelter population will have grown by 500 percent between 1980 and 1987, and while the city's homeless are more sheltered than in other cities, demand still may exceed supply by as much as 100 percent—not to mention problems with the quality of shelter.

Los Angeles has maybe 50,000 homeless, but it offers shelter to only 2,000, and it often excludes the mentally ill, the physically handicapped, alcohol and drug abusers and others, and 82 percent of its funds come from private sources. Washington, D.C. has no publicly-funded shelters, and one of its few private shelters provides one shower for every 300 people and one toilet for every 150. Such showcase cities as Las Vegas, Houston, Miami, and Atlanta support no public shelters at all and rely only on private charity, such as it is. In Phoenix the only public "shelter" is an outdoor, fenced-in lot without a roof.

Changing Demographics

UNTIL THE 1970s, the homeless were the typical skid-row mix: white, male, alcoholic. Now 45 percent are minorities, 21 percent family members, 13 percent single women, and their average age is only 34. In New York State, 32 percent of singles and 5 percent of family members are "mentally disabled"; 33 percent of singles and 9 percent of family members are "substance abusers"; 4 percent of singles and 24 percent of family members are "victims of domestic violence." As for ethnicity, 54 percent of singles and 57 percent of family members are black; 29 percent of singles and 10 percent of family members are white; and 16 percent of singles and 32 percent of family members are Hispanic. A UCLA study in Los Angeles found 51 percent of the homeless were white, 30 percent black, 11 percent Hispanic; 55 percent had never married, 65 percent were high school graduates, 39 percent had some postsecondary education, and 12 percent had college degrees.

Homelessness has most to do with housing, but it is related to every other deficit in the society, including family integrity, anomie, and most especially, the economy. Nobody really likes the dole, neither the givers nor receivers, except as an emergency measure when people cannot support themselves. The current White House policy of robbing the poor and giving to the rich, however, results in the poor being able neither to work at decent wages nor to qualify for decent welfare benefits.

During the 1970s alone more than 38 million well-paid jobs in basic industry were lost forever to deindustrialization. The incomes of the affluent meanwhile have risen to a level where $40,000 a year is considered just so-so, but the national minimum wage is still only $3.35 and millions of people, when they can get jobs, work for that. In 1982 more than three million people worked the whole year and still remained below the poverty line. Is that the price of progress? Hardly. Using what is for some purposes a threadbare model, the Japanese have maintained steady jobless rates of only about two percent, while also controlling inflation and holding a five-to-one spread between the highest- and lowest-paid employees, compared to ours of about eleven-to-one.

Conservatives are at ease with a high jobless rate because it loosens the labor market, reduces labor

Changes

EDITH TARCOV is retiring after 20 years as managing editor of *Dissent*. The Editorial Board expresses its appreciation of her editing, managerial work, and devotion to *Dissent* and its writers. She will, of course, stay on as a member of the board and thereby continue to serve the magazine. She plans to do some writing and other free-lance work.

MAXINE PHILLIPS becomes our managing editor with this issue. She holds a master's in journalism from Syracuse University and has worked in the field for many years. She has been active in the socialist religious movement and in the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), which she served as executive director from January 1984 to June 1985. For the last seven years she was managing editor of *Democratic Left*, a publication of DSA, and is the author of several booklets in the health and social-service fields. □

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costs, humbles workers, knocks the hell out of labor unions, pushes the jobless and underpaid onto the dole or out into the streets, where they then bedevil average taxpayers and make them vote conservative. A neat strategy and it works.

More puzzling are some strategy gyrations on the left, and the new notion, popularized by Frances Piven, Richard Cloward, and Barbara Ehrenreich that a permanent dole is somehow preferable to jobs, especially when the jobs are low-wage and demeaning. Preferable to whom? Certainly not to taxpayers who repeatedly vote for conservatives whose policies knock out even emergency welfare. The homeless, the hungry, the jobless, the afflicted—not to mention liberals and socialists—are heavy losers in this game. Moreover, all evidence points to a strong desire of the homeless and most welfare receivers to work—preferably at decent jobs but even at lousy ones—since nothing is so demeaning as the dole, and few things are more empowering than being able to support oneself. If we can only get a liberal swing in the 1986 congressional elections, perhaps we can raise the minimum wage and make the lousy jobs better, and perhaps we can make it easier for labor unions to organize and politicize the work force on the way to achieving some justice for the homeless. (The rest of us, too.) □

James B. Rule

Old Story, New Place (Before Marcos Fell)

JANUARY 1986: See if you can guess the trouble spot for U.S. foreign policy I am describing:

A poor country, struggling to industrialize, richly endowed with natural resources but suffering from decades of retrograde political leadership. The United States, in whose orbit this nation lies, has lately been making stronger noises about the need for social progress, but with little effect. Standing in the way is a self-serving elite, long opposed to change; it plunders foreign aid projects for its own benefit and sabotages any development efforts that risk broadening political participation. Most of the people are acutely aware of the gap in privilege between themselves and the elite; and many hold the United States responsible for keeping the cruel hierarchy in place.

In times of prosperity, discontent remains manageable. Disaffected intellectuals can be quietly gotten rid of or allowed to emigrate. Come hard times, however, and things get uglier. Optimism about the long-term prospects of social and economic development dims, and dissident voices become an angry chorus. The moral and political bankruptcy of the elite stands out more dramatically than ever, as underground movements threaten its survival. Ineffective in combating these movements directly, the elite wreaks vengeance on the moderate opposition. Publicly Washington wrings its hands and privately begs its local agents to clean up their act. But when the chips are down, the U.S. backs the elite, fearing that any other course would open the way to the loss of the entire country to communism.

Which country am I describing? Indonesia in 1963? Nicaragua in 1979? Iran in 1977? Vietnam in 1965? Chile in 1985? Saudi Arabia in 1990? Of course, with a qualification here or there, my description might apply to any or all of these.

The answer this season, though, is the Philippines. To be sure, there are plenty of peculiarities in the Philippine variation. For one thing, this is one Third World country that has been under direct

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colonial domination by the United States, having experienced two invasions by American forces. Its domestic elite has developed its political instincts under American tutelage, and the population has sent millions of its sons and daughters as emigrants to the United States. The resulting love-hate relationship is thus more complex than those linking America and other Third World nations. The Philippines also possess, atypically, a set of formally democratic political institutions of relatively long standing, another ambiguous legacy of American colonialism. Unfortunately, this has never been an obstacle to oligarchic domination by the elite. Finally, there is the extraordinary strategic importance of the two huge American military bases at Subic Bay and Clark Field. In post-Vietnam geopolitics, these installations represent the ultimate stakes in the struggle over who is to govern the Philippines.

WHO ARE THE PHILIPPINE ELITE? A group of old landowning families, linked by multiple ties of marriage, business dealings, and political alliances of convenience. For instance, Salvador Laurel, now running for vice president on a fusion ticket with Corazon Aquino, is the son of Jose Laurel, head of the collaborationist government under the Japanese. Serving under the senior Laurel in that government was the father of Benigno (Ninoy) Aquino, Salvador Laurel's late political rival whose murder at Manila airport in August of 1983 triggered the present crisis. Corazon (Cory) Aquino, widow of the martyred leader, is a cousin of dictator Ferdinand Marcos's close political associate Eduardo Cojuangco, who runs the country's corrupt cocoanut monopoly. The interconnections of family and money seem to go on forever. The elite has fostered a number of political parties—Salvador Laurel's United Nationalist Democratic Organization, for example, now holds forty-one seats in the National Assembly, making it the largest parliamentary opposition. But the official parties are more a caricature of American machine politics of the turn of this century—a series of alliances for dividing the spoils of office within a closed political class—than institutions for transmitting grass-roots demands.

The Philippine political spectrum shades off through various other groups of moderate and extreme opposition, virtually all denied a role in institutional politics. Moderate voices from the universities and the Church have come under growing government repression since martial law was instituted in 1972. At the extremes are the underground guerrilla movements, increasingly disciplined and ruthless forces based in the countryside but gradually extending to urban areas. Estimates of these underground forces range from twelve to thirty thousand. Needless to say, Marcos quickly points to this threat whenever pressed for reform.

If forced to apply the authoritarian-totalitarian distinction, one would bracket the Philippines as authoritarian—along with other countries where the government writ is overbearing and cruel, yet where organized opposition remains a hard-pressed source of political initiatives. But this distinction takes no account of the mayhem exacted by governments in maintaining both authoritarian and totalitarian rule. The Marcos regime is certainly inefficient in its efforts against its antagonists, but murderous for all that. The only remarkable thing about the assassination of Aquino was its ineptitude. In its search for enemies, the army has a habit of rounding up the usual suspects and killing them all, no doubt in hopes that the dead will include a few opposition activists. On the extreme left, guerrilla forces increasingly vie with the army in ruthlessly terrorizing rural populations.

Even thirty thousand guerrilla fighters would pose no threat to a regime that enjoyed a modicum of popular support in a nation of fifty-five million. The Marcos regime has forfeited such support through repressive policies and economic corruption, monumental even by Philippine standards. The great majority of the population shows little enthusiasm for the shadowy and increasingly deadly guerrilla movements. But people are seeking a rallying point, and institutional politics typically has little to offer. With the assassination of Benigno Aquino, the regime released a deluge of foreign and domestic disaffection, creating a situation where it must either tighten its repression or risk its own destruction.

MARCOS IS NOW A RECOGNIZED LIABILITY; American officials would like to see him gone. But he is proving less gracious about engineering his own political demise than the late Shah of Iran, and less amenable to forcible removal than Diem of Vietnam. What's more, American planners can find no one to put in his place. A new ultrarightist from the military might commit still more flamboyant human rights violations than Marcos, without making the country more governable. And more moderate figures, including Cory Aquino, would be unreliable on the one issue that overshadows all others to the United States: the future of Clark and Subic Bay. Almost any degree of domestic repression in the Philippines, one fears, would be an acceptable cost for undisturbed control of those bases.

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Hardly an optimistic picture for authentic democrats. Is there any hope of real improvement in the Philippines? A few glimmers, perhaps. There are at least the trappings of democratic forms. If the bases of political participation could be broadened, these might just evolve into something more than the vehicle for elite domination that they have been in the past. Conceivably this might come about through an alliance between the elite opposition and moderate grass-roots opponents of the Marcos regime. Cory Aquino has made occasional gestures that could lead in this direction. To be sure, alliances made for electoral purposes may be discarded as soon as they have served their purpose. But the assassination of Ninoy Aquino and the rise of a new generation to political consciousness have created a new set of imponderables. Perhaps the way is finally open to political participation by an authentic variety of forces and interests. □

POSTSCRIPT: As we go to press, events in the Philippines are moving too rapidly for comment in a quarterly. But it is important to remember the historical background sketched by James Rule, so that something may be learned for the future. After Reagan's absurd remark that both sides in the Philippines were guilty of vote fraud, Washington finally acquiesced in the fall of its friend Marcos. But it was the people of the Philippines who brought him down. Good for them! And as for the future, we watch and hope for something better.—EDS.

Rickie Flanders and Deborah Meier

TEACH: "Reaganizing" the American Schools

In the Reaganite war for "privatization" of American society, the latest target is education. A bill before Congress puts forward a voucher proposal called TEACH, The Equity and Choice Act of 1985.

This bill comes out of difficulties in pushing through a national tuition tax credit bill. While tuition tax credits are still on the Reagan agenda, this is a clever way to both get around certain Constitutional obstacles and to provide further ammunition for tuition tax credits, which openly favor higher-bracket taxpayers.

If passed, it would effectively demolish Chapter I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the federally funded education program passed in 1965 by Congress. Originally called "Title I," this program was a major effort to make possible early intervention in the education of low-income children by providing schools with the funding for "compensatory" education which would "supplement" the regular school programs. The program's purpose is to make up for the advantages provided in more affluent homes (the use of standard English, nursery school experience, availability of books, travel, etc.)—advantages that translate into greater ease in accommodating to academic demands.

Typically, Chapter I funds provide for special materials, books, supplies, some technology, and, above all, a lower student-to-teacher ratio. The "supplementary" programs involve math, reading, language arts (a broad category which includes grammar, spelling, writing, and speaking), and sometimes special language instruction for students with limited English.

Funds go to the states, which disburse them to local school districts based upon certain formulas. The two criteria for a school's eligibility are the number of students whose families receive Aid for Families of Dependent Children (AFDC) and the number of students who are eligible and apply for free or reduced-price lunches. A school's allocation is determined by the ratio of this group to the school's total student population. However, this ratio must reach a specified percentage (currently in New York, 44 percent) for the school to receive Chapter I funds.

Two recent situations in New York City illustrate problems created by these Chapter I procedures. In one case some schools in Chinatown were in danger of losing Chapter I entitlement because they failed to meet the AFDC requirement despite their very large poverty population. This was due to the fact that the New York Chinese community is reluctant to apply for AFDC. To qualify, one must not only *be* poor, but be willing to apply for a free lunch.

While the great virtue of Chapter I is that the

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funds go directly to programs for the academically most neediest, some of those barely less needy are entirely excluded. And the more economically integrated a school, the less likely it is that the needy will receive any Chapter I services. These are serious defects which more generous and flexible funding could easily overcome.

UNDER THE PROPOSED voucher bill, currently Chapter I-eligible parents would receive a voucher averaging $600 redeemable for (1) continued compensatory services at the home school, or (2) tuition, if any, for services and/or full enrollment at an out-of-district public school, or (3) the same at a private school, or (4) various combinations of the above. In the event that the market value of the services or tuition comes to less than the munificent voucher, the balance will have to be returned to the local education agency.

All administrative and transportation costs would come from local Chapter I funds. The burden of investigating an institution to demonstrate its "diligence to ensure that voucher funds . . . are properly used," would also be charged to Chapter I funds. A nightmare of bureaucracy is conjured up by the tons of newly created paper work alone!

Unlike the requirement that a Chapter I school establish and retain its program, the voucher bill would explicitly exempt schools (public or private) from the requirement of establishing any Chapter I or "supplementary" services.

There is one restriction on the voucher-receiving school: it may not follow a racially discriminatory policy. But not to worry. The fellow determining whether a school followed such a policy would be the attorney general, who would have "exclusive authority to investigate" and then, if he sought a judgment against the school, and the court so ordered (a process likely to take from one to five years), the school *might* not remain eligible to receive voucher children. This scheme is "simplicity itself" according to its masterminds at the right-wing Heritage Foundation.

In effect, the Reaganites are saying to the poor and minorities, "We want to get government off your back and so we propose self-help. We're tired of throwing money at problems so we're going to settle with you right now. Take your $600 and let us be done with annual haggling over federal aid to education. We're going to get out of the business and we're going to help the states and localities, over time, get out of the education business. If you don't like what's around in the marketplace (or it doesn't like you), do your own thing."

In plain English: "Take the money and run."

Chester Finn, Secretary of Education Bennett's newly appointed assistant secretary for educational research and improvement, is quoted in *Education Week* as saying, "When parents actively chose a school, their children did not score higher (or lower) on reading achievement tests as a result." But he adds, "One of the fundamental principles of democracy" is the need for equality of opportunity and "low-income parents must have the same opportunity as wealthier families to choose private schools."

What kind of choice would really be available under the voucher plan? Let's take the average parent (in this case, the average very low-income parent). How does he or she find the time to become informed about the quality of a school? There is general reputation (everyone knows Harvard is a classy place); there are neighborhood rumors (sometimes rife and occasionally accurate); there are recommendations of friends and relatives.

But to make a sensible choice for one's child, a parent might like a firsthand look at the possibilities. This should involve one or two visits of reasonable duration to one or two places, conversations with administrators, a tour of the building(s), and visits to a few classes. These will not reveal everything but will give an observant parent an idea about the atmosphere in the school(s), the physical conditions, the attitudes toward children, the children's attitudes toward the institution, and a notion of the underlying educational philosophy, if there is one, upon which the school's program is based.

To do this, a parent must either be unemployed or employed in a job that permits a day or two off from work. The slightest acquaintance with the average low-income parent tells you that those who work can rarely get the time off (to say nothing of being able to afford it) even when an emergency arises in school. As for those not working, they are usually involuntarily unemployed and their problems far transcend the choice of schools.

And remember: since eligibility must be determined annually, what if the child's scores go up? Or the family income changes? Or the eligibility rules are altered? This is not a one-time exercise.

But let us assume that this parent has been able to make some sort of "choice" based on solid information, rumor, or a toss of the coin. Let's say this parent has chosen (and been accepted at) a neighborhood parochial school (the underlying expectation of the proponents of vouchers appears to be just that). This school, in a large city, charges about $1,000. Perhaps the family can obtain a partial scholarship which, with the $600 voucher,

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allows the parent to enroll the child at a mere $300 out-of-pocket expense. While even this cost would be prohibitive for the very poorest families who often have the largest number of school-age children, many not-quite-so-poor families often do make enormous sacrifices to send their children to the local parochial school. The $600 would certainly help them (and the parochial school).

But then, let's suppose that this parent's child is in need of one-to-one help. (This is one of the benefits provided under Chapter I.) The typical urban parochial school has very large classes. Furthermore, the school is not required by the voucher plan to create Chapter I programs or any special remediation.

Let's further suppose that this child has major behavioral and/or adjustment problems (as, in fact, a disproportionate number of the most disadvantaged children do). The pleasant parochial school is not eager to increase its problems and so, after some attempts to "help" the child, the school summons the parents and says, "Sorry. This youngster doesn't belong here. Try a different place."

So, clearly, even where money isn't a major problem, "choice" is often limited.

CONSIDER A MORE AFFLUENT FAMILY and a high-class private school to which the parents would love to send their child. Classes are small; the program is enriched with arts and crafts, intramural athletics, advanced academic courses; teachers are kind and the building is safe. This child is not a genius, just a nice average child with no particular emotional problems. Family income is such that, with sacrifice, it can just about encompass the $6,000 tuition. If it turns out that the child has certain academic problems keeping up with some of the intellectually elite students, the parents might spend another $1,000 on tutoring on the side.

This family, it would seem, is an ideal customer. But, our very nice school boasts that 99 percent of its graduates go on to Ivy League colleges. This pleasant average child is simply not the kind of student our school is interested in. And so, as those who have tried registering their children at top-rated schools know, it isn't the parent who has the choice; it's the school. How much more this would be the case with the children of Chapter I-eligible families.

THE RATIONALE for the voucher proposal is the claim that Chapter I has failed in its purpose and that "studies have been uniformly negative."

Studies of Chapter I "results" are largely based on reading and math scores on standardized tests. This is not the place to go into the defects of this kind of evaluation. However, the kind of longitudinal study undertaken, for example, by the Perry Preschool evaluators is not possible on a national scale with the Chapter I programs. First, there is no equatable control group to measure against. Second, mobility among the urban poor is such that many children may have their compensatory programs interrupted or discontinued. And third, the more meaningful kinds of evaluation available for a small and discrete group—such as completion of 12 years or more of schooling, job records, health records, avoidance of criminal activities, and general stability in adulthood—could only be done, and that with great difficulty, on a district-by-district basis and over an extended period of time. However, given all these understood limitations, the studies that have been done are *not*, in fact, dominantly negative.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (an independent study by the Education Commission of the States) reported a dramatic rise in reading scores of disadvantaged students over the past ten years. According to the Department of Education's own "Sustaining Effects Study," Title I recipients continued to outperform comparable students who did not receive those programs. One study (cited by the Education Department) showed gains of as much as 75 percent over similar students who were not beneficiaries.

In 1981, when Congress was making the alterations that transformed Title I to Chapter I, the *New York Times* reported congressional comments like the following: Vermont Senator Stafford, "This is a classic case where I thought about the country as well as my own state and Title I is clearly important for the country."

Across the nation, reported the National Assessment of Educational Progress, black nine-year-olds made gains of 9.9 percent. A Philadelphia official is quoted as saying, "We've seen significant gains in the inner city . . . there are gains at all levels." The same article characterizes Title I as the government's best-known and most effective program for disadvantaged children.

The Reaganite mania for "privatization" is one of the ugliest aspects of this administration's social meanness. And, of course, it is disguised as "philosophy."

This "philosophical" stance has created strange bedfellows. The traditional populist hostility toward bigness has been successfully turned against public schools—once viewed as the model of local control. An upwardly mobile but economically insecure new "middle class," fearful of minority

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inner-city schools yet not rich enough for the elite ones, is a second nervous ally in behalf of the president's voucher plan. And then there is a third appeal—the widespread feeling that everyone has a right to a school that matches the family's own particular values and views.

While all modern industrial societies have required some form of universal compulsory education to modernize and upgrade their work forces, the idea of a lay-controlled and decentralized public school system, in which all citizens have a common stake, is both critical for a democracy and central to the American experience. It has rarely performed the miracles demanded of it, but its successes have been significant: not merely in terms of number of years spent in school, functional literacy rates, or job training provided, but above all in posing sharply the right of all to common opportunities, equal obligations, a shared destiny.

PUBLIC DEBATE ABOUT WHAT SCHOOL SHOULD BE LIKE, what curriculum should be taught, etc., is a healthy, if annoying (particularly to professionals) hallmark of a democratic society. The debate over what we seek for our children today is, after all, a way to examine and shape what we want for society tomorrow. And while our schools, as one of the major institutions of our society, partake of its class and racist character, they still come *closer* than any other institution to being inclusive. Relatively, they have been havens of egalitarianism for many young people.

There are painfully few places left in our mobile and privatized world where communal decisions can still be made. Neighborhoods, local political clubs, even unions have been weakened. But in the case of schools, which often present us with the need to talk about common values, the loss would be particularly serious. Libertarians and fundamentalists argue that "the state" has no right to interfere in matters of values. They stand for the privatization of schools *because* education must be, and is, so inextricably bound up with matters of value.

This is an argument that democrats must address directly. For the notion that a society has no right to articulate civic values, in part through the way it educates its youth, is either naive or suspect. Of course democracies make decisions that express their values. The debate over educational reform includes, and properly, a debate over values. But the current debate over vouchers is a debate over the efficacy of democracy itself as against a pseudo-freedom of "marketplace" politics.

When New Left critics of public schools were proposing free "independent" schools in the 1960s, education historian Diane Ravitch argued against their ahistorical perspective. In *The Great School Wars* Ravitch wrote:

> "What is inevitably lost sight of is the monumental accomplishment of the public school system. . . . It has provided free, unlimited educational opportunities for millions, regardless of language, race, class or religion. . . . Without the public schools, despite obvious faults, this unprecedented social and economic mobility would be inconceivable."

This praise may be overdone; the historical record is more complex; but the public school ideal, however flawed in reality, had unprecedented power as a symbol of what America could and should be. As such, it helped create the impetus for the very ideals it represented.

While the left-wing critics of public schooling are now quieter, the right-wing critics offer a strikingly similar rationale. The small band of left "free-schoolers" in the 1960s forgot that for every garden of freedom they thought they were initiating, segregationists were opening up a dozen private racist academies. Today the threat is more awesome: the renewed vigor of religious fundamentalism, with schools springing up everywhere in which children will be protected from "secular humanism." The data also indicate a modest but significant increase in middle-of-the-road private schools for the affluent, and also of hit-and-run little schools for the desperate and aspiring poor.

Businesses of all sorts will soon be opening up a supermarket of appealing "alternative" services to lure customers fearful that their children will lack something necessary for survival in a nervous and insecure world: just as each child today needs the latest in sneakers and video games, so too perhaps the latest in school services.

In this country, freedom of choice and individualism have always lived in tension with community and solidarity. At a time in which the sense of community is shaky, and individualism is often a code word for narcissism and private greed, we would be foolish to let wither one of our most central and powerful shared ideals—our public schools. They may not be so easy to reinvent. □

Coming in our next issue:
A Declaration for a New European Left
by Peter Glotz

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Jefferson Morley

Better NED Than Dead?

Just down the hall from a door marked "20th Century Fox," on the third floor of a nondescript office building on the edge of downtown Washington, D.C., are the offices of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). Controversy has regularly wafted out of this unlikely bureaucratic outpost over the last two years. The Endowment's mission—"to strengthen democratic institutions around the world"—seems unobjectionable. With only thirteen employees, the Endowment's bureaucrat-to-scandal ratio is impressive even by the Reagan administration's standards. But because the press and NED's critics in Congress have paid little attention to what the "D" in its name stands for, they have missed the importance of the Endowment to Reagan's foreign policy.

The latest flap over the Endowment occurred in November when it was disclosed that NED had given $1.4 million to two right-wing groups in France. Particularly embarrassing was the news that more than $500,000 of the money funded a student group that had fewer than 1,000 members and that had been founded as the offshoot of a gangland organization known for its violent and criminal predilections. Last spring the Endowment made the news when its president, Carl Gershman, former aide to U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick and former director of Social Democrats USA, criticized the Association of American Publishers. The Association had, after receiving NED funding, sent a list of books to the Moscow Book Fair that did not, in Gershman's view, reflect the "diversity" of American life. And in April 1984 NED caught hell from Reagan's own ambassador in Panama in a State Department cable after it was discovered that NED was funding a supposedly nonpartisan labor institute in Panama that gave $20,000 to a presidential candidate in a hotly contested election.

Gershman and other defenders of the Endowment contend that these flaps are just media nitpicking. They note correctly that Endowment officials have merely executed the mission they were assigned by Reagan and Congress. NED's critics, they say, are carpers at best; suspiciously timid about democratic ideals at worst. Congressional representatives who support the Endowment, but wonder why NED thought democracy was in trouble in France, are defeated by this defense. Having assumed that Reagan's definition of democracy is the same as their own, they can only charge NED with violating bureaucratic procedures and hope it doesn't happen again. The principles guiding NED's operations, and especially the undemocratic impulses that link these controversies, go unexamined. Not only are NED's opponents losing the debate over funding, they are losing an invaluable opportunity to offer a vision of U.S. foreign policy that would be considerably more democratic and effective than Ronald Reagan's.

NED is best thought of as part of the conservative effort to institutionalize the Reagan Doctrine. The Doctrine is usually defined by its advocacy of active military aid to anticommunist rebels around the globe. But the Doctrine's global ambitions require that the battle be carried to peaceful fronts as well. This part of the job is assigned to the Endowment.

Attacking communists might be sufficient reason for Congress to aid a guerrilla army thousands of miles away, but it is not sufficient rationale to fund an agency down the block. A National Endowment for Anticommunism would not (yet) sell on Capitol Hill, much less in the Third World. So NED officials take pains to emphasize that recipients must be not only anticommunist but prodemocratic. The grants to the French groups, however, suggest that NED's criteria for "prodemocratic" is somewhat elastic. In practice, neither an organization's history, stated principles, nor ongoing activities are enough to prove its democratic credentials to the Endowment. "Democracy" is in the eye of the beholder, i.e., Endowment president Gershman.

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The flap over the Moscow Book Fair list confirmed that Endowment officials reserve the right of ultimate judgment regarding even the slightest political deviations of NED recipients. In 1984 the Endowment gave $20,880 to the International Freedom to Publish Committee (a subsidiary of the Association of American Publishers) to send 300 American books to the Moscow Book Fair. The Fair is one occasion for at least a few Soviet people to have relatively free access to books from the West. Conservatives insisted that the list was skewed toward liberalism. Gershman's assumption was that the Endowment requirement of "diversity" could be objectively measured and that the judgment of the recipient—no matter what its democratic convictions—was not good enough to meet that standard. Gershman consulted "several independent, expert sources" (who turned out to be four fellow neoconservatives) and exercised what he forthrightly called "supervisory responsibility." He publicly denounced the list. The publisher's association offered to return the grant, and NED gladly accepted. Gershman told his directors that NED "would learn from this experience and that the Endowment would be better prepared to anticipate problems. . . . "

Gershman is too modest. His record of "anticipating problems" is excellent. There are dozens of democratic groups around the world that NED could have funded in the last two years. But none of them has ever gained NED funding because their activities might well have disturbed Gershman. Consider, for example, the Mutual Support Group in Guatemala. This courageous group of human rights activists might seem a natural for Endowment support. It has denounced the abuses of the Guatemalan government and suffered appalling terrorist attacks for its trouble. NED has funded groups similar to the Mutual Support Group before. For example, NED helped pay for the distribution of the Polish Helsinki Watch Group's detailed and valuable human rights report. I asked Gershman if NED would give the Mutual Support Group money to produce a similar, albeit much fatter, report on governmental abuses in Guatemala? "You have to ask what will best promote democracy in these certain circumstances," he said. "We're not interested in engaging in support for human rights [advocates] that are engaged in political programs," he said. Thus, it would seem, demanding that the government account for political prisoners and assassinations is "political" and therefore unacceptable behavior in Guatemala—but not in Poland. "Certain activities by democrats," Gershman went on to explain, "may not necessarily increase democracy."

THE MUTUAL SUPPORT GROUP, not coincidentally, is scorned by the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala. The brutal assassination of one of its leaders and her two-year-old son was called "an accident" by one Reagan administration official. It comes as no surprise when Gershman adds that NED has not received an application for assistance from the Mutual Support Group.

Gershman's unspoken proviso for NED aid is that the democratic group be able to reach a "clear understanding" with the Endowment that it will not do anything that might force him to exercise his "supervisory responsibility." I asked Gershman if he would fund the Center for Legal and Social Studies in Argentina. This is the human rights organization that provided crucial assistance to the government prosecution in the trials of the Argentine high command. Five top Argentine military commanders were convicted in December for directing a government program that killed 9,000 people, many of them democrats. "We haven't gotten a proposal from them [the center] that would encourage democracy in Argentina in a constructive and creative way," Gershman said.

Gershman repeatedly cites Endowment activities in Chile as proof that NED will support democrats of the left as well as those of the right. The Endowment funds a think tank sponsored by left- and right-wing and center parties. But, of course, Endowment officials, like most minimally percep-

Why a Resurgence Of Liberalism Is "Guaranteed"

The "herd of independent minds" (as Harold Rosenberg once described American intellectuals) is on the trample again. This time, toward the right—and often, amusingly, it's some of the same people who not so long ago were snorting indignantly against *Dissent*'s criticisms of the New Left. You can hardly pick up a liberal, or literary, magazine these days without seeing evidence of this drift. At the one session of the PEN Congress in January that I was able to attend, the dominant tone was a sort of weary conservative resignation.

Is it perverse to find all this somewhat encouraging? For it's been my experience that once the intellectuals start crowding onto a bandwagon, it's a pretty sure sign that the bandwagon will soon collapse.

I.H. □

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tive conservative thinkers, now realize that Pinochet's nakedly fascistic dictatorship is likely to ultimately aid the Chilean left, and not just the communists.

The democratic left, it should be clear, is only eligible for Endowment support insofar as it enlists in the larger goals of the Reagan administration. Democratic groups abroad understand this and have made it clear that they are not available for duty in Reagan's army. Black union leaders from South Africa, for example, visited Washington in early 1985. Upon arrival they were greeted by AFL-CIO officials, including Irving Brown, the director of the labor federation's Free Trade Union Institute in Paris and the largest single recipient of NED funds. (It was Brown who dispensed the $1.4 million to the right-wing groups in France.)

As the conference proceeded, the South Africans saw that Brown and the others were supporting their struggle, not because of its democratic character, but for its use in Cold War politics. The leader of the South African delegation angrily refused even to sit with AFL-CIO officials. And in early 1986 the Congress of South African Trade Unions decided to forgo any formal ties with the Free Trade Union Institute or with NED.

This hardly means that NED is irreversibly tainted, only that it needs drastic rehabilitation. The Endowment, it should be remembered, grew out of the neoconservative critique of Jimmy Carter's foreign policy. That critique rightly noted that democratic and pluralist political systems are the best guarantors of basic human rights. It noted, again correctly, that the absence of gross human rights violations was no guarantor of freedom. The neoconservatives immediately betrayed both ideas by proclaiming violent anticommunist regimes to be budding democracies and hailing the alleged decline of monstrous violence as the beginnings of embryonic democracy. Raul Alfonsín has tirelessly reiterated in Argentina (and Vinicio Cerezo is now emphasizing in Guatemala) that accountability is the essence of democratic rule of law. Carter's "human rights" emphasis is in fact essential to promoting democracy. Thus human rights groups the world over should be primary candidates for Endowment assistance.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF PLURALISM could be further bolstered without reference to the East-West struggle. NED has given aid to *La Prensa* in Nicaragua, the Managua daily that faces Sandinista censorship for its antigovernment inclinations. In Haiti, Radio Soleil, the Catholic Church's radio network, has been shut down for the same offense. It too deserves NED support (Not surprisingly, Gershman disagrees saying, "The situation is not at all analogous.") In El Salvador, the last moderate newspaper, *El Independiente,* was closed by government troops in January 1981. NED funding could help its editor, Jorge Pinto, resume publishing.

The Endowment could give priority to countries and regions where democracy is nonexistent, fragile, or endangered. Western Europe today fits intc none of those categories. Where NED does focus its activities, it must aid organizations that truly need support. Thus the Endowment's funding of moderate and conservative political parties of Latin America, groups rarely wanting for generous donors, should be cut off. The Endowment's assistance to democrats in Eastern Europe should continue. One does not have to be a right-wing ideologue to support groups like Solidarity in Poland and Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia.

Above all, the Endowment must drop Gershman's all-purpose fear of those "certain activities"—one hears the echo of un-American activities—"by democrats that do not increase democracy." It must drop its notion that Americans must exercise "supervisory responsibility" over the democrats of the world. When democratic South Africans choose to support the African National Congress, we should not assume that we know better than they do. If the National Endowment for Democracy cannot understand that democracy begins with trusting democrats, it should be put out of business once and for all. □

Welcome Aboard!

We are pleased to announce the addition of two new members to the *Dissent* Editorial Board:

• Joanne Barkan, a political activist and writer, member of the DSA National Executive Committee, and author of a recent book: *Visions of Emancipation: The Italian Workers' Movement Since 1945.*

• Martin Kilson, who teaches in the government department at Harvard, and is the co-author of *New States in the Modern World* and author of the forthcoming *Neither Insiders Nor Outsiders: Blacks in American Society.*

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Joanne Barkan

The Italian CP Debates Its Future

With a sigh of relief, the Italian Communist party (PCI) laid to rest the "Soviet Question" in the early 1980s. For more than two decades, the leadership of this massive party (29.9 percent of the vote in the 1983 parliamentary elections) had been gingerly stepping away from the Soviet Union and reinforcing its doctrine of independent, national roads to socialism. What was seen in Italy as the definitive break between at least the leadership of the PCI and the Soviet Union came in December 1981 when the PCI executive committee passed a resolution declaring that the "phase of socialist development that began with the Russian Revolution of 1917 has exhausted its driving force." In Italian political code, this meant that the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc countries were not seen as revolutionary socialist societies or as progressive models.

One question continued to nag at PCI leaders: how much pro-Soviet sentiment was there at the base of the party? A pro-Soviet amendment to the official document prepared for the PCI's 16th Congress in March 1983 occasioned a party-wide survey. Tens of thousands of members voted on the amendment. Fewer than 5 percent supported it. The nagging doubts dispelled, the party could presumably get on with other tasks.

Just three years later, the PCI is preparing for another congress with yet another highly publicized debate. The congress was called to clarify the identity, role, and political line of a party disoriented by the sudden death of Secretary Enrico Berlinguer in 1984. At first the debate churned around two questions. Should the PCI commit itself to getting out of the capitalist system and building a radically different society? Or should it be a loyal reformer of capitalism? This debate captured extensive media coverage, and, as always in Italy, a new set of catch words was spawned. The *fuoriuscitisti* (those who would go beyond capitalism) were pitted against the *miglioristi* (those who would improve capitalism).

Lanfranco Turci, the 45-year-old president of the Emilia-Romagna regional government, fueled the debate last August with an article in *l'Unità*, the PCI's daily. Turci and those who side with him argued that both the Leninist notion of socialist revolution and the "Third Way" strategy (based on structural reforms and, more recently, incorporating social movements such as feminism, the peace movement, and "green" culture) are chimeras. According to Turci, the only other choice is social democracy, with all its limitations and periodic crises. (Social democracy refers here to the large reformist parties in Northern Europe that are fully accepted in their political systems, have led coalition governments, and have loyally managed—and sometimes reformed—capitalism.) On the front page of *l'Unità*, this unequivocal rejection of the Third Way strategy—a strategy that had shaped the PCI's postwar identity—was noteworthy.

The *miglioristi* are not a unified group. They represent various generations and wings of the party. But they all agree that the PCI must give up its old rhetoric and schemas to become Italy's true reformist party. A few even advocate dropping the name Communist and joining the Socialist International.

Outside the PCI, skeptics did not expect the debate to clarify the party's identity. Giorgio Galli, a well-known political commentator, argued that the debate over whether the PCI should adapt to capitalism or try to go beyond it was not real. In actuality the PCI, wrote Galli, has adapted for decades. But the leadership has never made this fact explicit simply because the membership still hopes for a different and better society, historically called socialism. Galli believes that, in practice, a majority of the PCI would accept the loyal management of capitalism as the party's task. A sizeable minority would not. If resolving the question means splitting the party, most of the leadership would prefer to live with ambiguity. This resembles the attitude it once adopted on the Soviet question.

The "in-or-out-of-capitalism" debate is an old one. As Galli points out, the dozens of precedents include not only Eduard Bernstein and the orthodox German Marxists at the end of the last century, but also the discussion within the Italian Socialist party (PSI) in the early 1960s over

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whether to enter a coalition government with the Christian Democrats. That argument split the PSI.

WHY THEN SHOULD A PARTY as seemingly sophisticated and well-established as the PCI recapitulate this old debate? Why now? The likely answer is that the PCI, like a crippled giant, has spent almost six years languishing on the sidelines of Italian politics. Stranded in opposition, the party must decide what to do next. Its ambiguous identity has become too uncomfortable. The PCI has been unable to prevent defeats of the labor movement; it has seen important social movements—the peace and women's movements in particular—founder; it has failed to attract young people, so that the Communist youth section has many fewer members now than it claimed ten years ago; it has watched almost helplessly as Prime Minister Bettino Craxi of the PSI appropriates the title of reformer and modernizer, although his government has yet to pass significant reforms. The PCI has been turned out of almost all the local, provincial, and regional governments that it won in 1975. Mediocre performance in some locales lost the Communists votes in 1980 and 1985. But regardless of the PCI's record, Craxi's PSI prefers to set up coalitions with other centrist parties rather than govern locally with the PCI.

With 29.9 percent of the vote, the PCI can't hope to enter the national government without coalition partners. Yet the only potential collaborator, the PSI, has been bent on isolating the PCI. Moreover, the Communists are not expanding their electorate. Although the party's share of the vote fluctuates a bit from election to election, there may even be an overall tendency toward decline from the high of 34.4 percent reached in 1976.

This is the difficult terrain out of which the debate on the PCI's identity grows. Will it be easier to regain strength if it is a transformer of capitalism or just a modernizer? To those who argue that both are necessary steps, with social democratization preceding radicalization, observers within and outside the PCI respond that the party has developed neither identity adequately and certainly has not clarified the links between them. Critics say that if the PCI were given responsibility for Italy's government tomorrow, it would not know what to do. The critics are probably correct.

Already vindicated are the skeptics who predicted that the precongressional debate would fail to clarify the party's identity. After the *fuoriuscitisti/miglioristi* conflict caught the attention of the press, PCI leaders tacitly agreed to avoid a polarizing argument that would lead to a vote on that question. At its December 1985 meeting, the central committee voted overwhelmingly to adopt the document produced by a special commission for the April 1986 congress. This document reaffirmed both the critique of the Soviet Union and the PCI's commitment to Western Europe. It also called for a *governo di programma* (a coalition government formed around a programmatic agreement), but it did not specify what that program might be or which parties could concur on a program. One disgruntled PCI leader summarized a widespread negative reaction to this part of the document when he said it simply used the words new, renewal, and renovation to cover over "uncertainties, imprecisions, vague and generic ideas." For most observers, the central committee vote was another example of how the leadership rallies around the bureaucratic center in order to hold the party together, rather than deciding the questions that divide the PCI.

Yet, as formulated, even the truncated *fuoriuscitisti* versus *miglioristi* debate managed to skirt the most important issue. The Italian Communists are in a bind. They cannot hope to maintain their constituency unless they get a chance to enter the government and implement reforms of some kind. But to do that they will need much more support than they now have—support based on broader cross-class alliances. They cannot build up that support and those alliances unless they have attractive, believable programs. In office, they would face the opposition of the capitalist class and of Italy's many middle-class groups and special interests, all fearing for their privileges. The PCI's ability to withstand and maneuver around the opposition would then depend on the depth and breadth of the support for its program. And program is precisely where the Communists are weak.

THERE IS ANOTHER PROBLEM. Italian governments are increasingly unproductive because of the large number of squabbling parties in parliament. Italians put it this way: Democracy is blocked. No coalition—right, center, or center-left—is able to agree on a legislative program. Even efforts to rationalize the economy a bit or to carry out an investigation run into obstacles. With the Christian Democratic party much weaker than it was in the early postwar period, every coalition is more and more dependent on the support of small willful parties representing entrenched interests. For this reason, popular sentiment has been growing over the last decade for a change in the proportional representation system. The goal would be to develop in Italy a two-party or two-coalition system.

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The PCI's precongress debate unexpectedly focused attention on this problem. At the December central committee meeting, Pietro Ingrao, a respected elder statesman of the party's left wing, presented an alternative to the secretariat's document. Ingrao proposed a two-year *governo costituente* (constituent government) made up of all the legitimate, democratic parties, which would rewrite the sections of the constitution dealing with government structure and the electoral system. Changes would probably include granting the party with a relative majority additional seats in parliament and/or setting a minimum of 5 percent of the vote for parliamentary representation. (These provisions are typical of other West European countries.) After two years, elections would be held. Even if a conservative bloc won, reasoned Ingrao, the left would be better able to play its role of parliamentary opposition, and, most important, the left would have a chance of being voted into office in the future with enough strength to pass its program.

INGRAO'S PROPOSAL received only ten favorable votes and twelve abstentions among the more than 200 central committee members. But his support is much greater at the base of the party, where his idea will be brought up again. The *governo costituente* will probably be discussed at the PCI's congress. Outside the party, reaction to the proposal was strong. Ingrao's photo filled the cover of the most influential newsmagazine in Italy, *L'Espresso*. In the accompanying story, he was hailed for giving the PCI a concrete political project, for keeping the precongress debate open, and for responding to the crisis of the Republic.

More than other PCI leaders, Ingrao has been able to use the dilemmas of his party to fashion a clear-cut political choice, one that is radical in its own way and risky. Interestingly enough, his proposal would probably bring about the alternation of conservative and progressive blocs in government that has been the goal of many Communist *miglioristi*. This alternation characterizes most of the European countries where there are strong social democratic parties. Thus Ingrao, who is a leader of the *fuoriuscitisti*, has managed to break away from the stale left/right dichotomies within the party. This is a promising sign.

There are others. The PCI's research institutes have been organizing joint conferences with West German, British, Swedish, and other West European socialists to discuss common problems. PCI leaders have been meeting with their counterparts in the northern parties. The PCI is expanding its contacts within the Socialist International. If the party becomes accepted in the "mainstream" West European left, more channels will open; there will be more access to the international media; contacts in the United States might be broadened.

The intellectuals and PCI leaders behind these efforts include, among others, both Pietro Ingrao and various *miglioristi*. Again, the old right/left rigidities are breaking down. Everyone involved agrees that more cooperation within the European left is needed to develop adequate programs. Ultimately, they argue, the left will succeed in implementing an alternative model (no one is very comfortable using the word socialism) only when there is a united Europe that can steer a course independent of the Soviet Union and the United States.

In the end, the discussion of the PCI's identity and project may fizzle out. Party leaders afraid of losing everything—identity, name, votes, local government positions—may opt to clarify nothing. Still, something is rumbling in this political colossus. Perhaps it will erupt in time to help revitalize the European left. □

We mourn the death of

OLOF PALME

Sweden's social democrat and our friend

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Thomas B. Edsall

Shifts in the Political Alignments

The balance of political and economic power in the nation's capital is in flux. By the end of the 1985 session of the 99th Congress, the House had passed a tax reform bill shifting—over the next five years—$140 billion of the nation's tax burden from individuals to corporations, and eliminating entirely the tax liabilities of six million workers at or below the poverty level. At the same time, Congress enacted the Gramm-Rudman balanced budget amendment sharply reducing federal spending through 1991, a proposal that potentially forces a major withdrawal of the federal government from domestic economic activity, thereby achieving one of the central goals of the conservative movement.

These conflicting developments reflect an increasingly complex set of forces at work in the determination of national policy—complex in comparison with the relatively simple days at the outset of the Reagan administration. In 1981, when Ronald Reagan first took office, the battle lines were visibly drawn, and power was clearly on the side of the political right. Perhaps most important, the business community was at that time united behind tax and spending cuts, providing the strongest base of support in at least a generation for a set of policies redistributing income upwards. This leverage was reinforced by the sudden ascendancy of the political right—the National Conservative Political Action Committee contributed significantly to the 1981 Republican takeover of the Senate; the Christian right was emerging as a national force with the capacity to produce votes; and such issues as the Panama Canal, abortion, and SALT II had produced a steadily rising flow of cash for both the Republican party committees and the conservative organizations capitalizing on the high-tech fundraising techniques pioneered by such men as Richard Viguerie, Steven Winchell, and Bruce Eberle. The entire right-wing movement was given at least the veneer of intellectual and economic legitimacy by the growth of such conservative think tanks as the Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute, and the Hoover Institution.

Over the past five years, the conservative movement and the Republican party have continued to demonstrate muscle, and both the Democratic party and the political left have yet to regain the coherence necessary to compete effectively. The political map has, however, changed substantially. What follows is an outline of some of the developments that will, in part, define the political outcomes of the 1986 and 1988 elections, and the shape of national economic policy.

General Trends

PERHAPS THE SINGLE MOST important political development in recent years has been the reemergence of class- or income-based commitments to the two major political parties. In a process sharply accelerated by the Reagan administration, the central difference between the Republican and Democratic parties has come to be the income of their supporters, reviving the kind of partisan division characteristic of the 1930s and 1940s. These income-based commitments to the two parties declined sharply in the 1950s and 1960s, only to begin to resurface in the 1970s, probably as a result of a stagnating national economy, and then to return in force in the 1980s, almost assuredly because the policies of the Reagan administration produced a regressive redistribution of tax burdens and spending benefits. In 1956, for example, the nation's poor and lower-middle class—the bottom 30 percent—were only 8 percentage points more Democratic than the upper-middle class, and 43 percentage points more Democratic than the nation's affluent,

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those falling in the top ten percent of the income distribution. By 1984, these differences had grown respectively to 31 and 64 percentage points.

The changing structure of partisan allegiance to the two parties has been paralleled by voting patterns. Eisenhower in 1956 received majority support from all income groups; Reagan in 1984, while winning almost the same overall percentage as Eisenhower, decisively lost among the very poor, 32-68, and only slightly less so among the lower-middle class, 43-57, while overwhelmingly carrying the upper-middle class, 64-36, and the most affluent, 75-25.

While the emergence of class- and income-based commitments worked to the advantage of the Democrats in the realignment of the 1930s, in the 1980s it has worked, so far, to the advantage of the Republicans. After 50 years as a minority, the GOP has now gained effective parity with the Democratic party, particularly when voter turnout patterns favoring the affluent are taken into account. The GOP gains in part grow out of the fact that from the postwar period through the mid-1970s, median family income, in real, constant dollars, grew significantly. From 1950 to 1973, the median family income went from $12,341 to $24,663 (in 1981 dollars) and the percentage of families with income in excess of $25,000 (in effect, gaining some degree of economic security) grew from 8 to 42 percent.

Over the past decade, however, growth in the median family income has come to a dead halt. More important, economic pressures on working adults, particularly young adults entering the marketplace during the past 10 years, have sharply intensified. From 1973 to 1984, average gross weekly earnings fell from $198.35 to $173.48 (in 1977 dollars). The cost of financing the mortgage on a median-priced home has gone from 14 to 44 percent of a 37-year-old median wage-earner's income.

Republican Party

ALL THESE TRENDS—both the rising median income from 1950 through 1974, and the stagnation since—have worked to the advantage of the GOP. Rising incomes increased the pool of likely Republican voters, particularly as the correlation between Republicanism and high income grew. Stagnation gave credibility to the GOP charge that liberalism had failed, and encouraged a zero-sum view in which government transfers to the poor were increasingly seen as reducing the income of moderate-income workers.

One of the core strengths of the Republican party has been its ability to place the Democratic party in the position of defending a liberal establishment. The GOP has portrayed the Democratic party as dominated by a bureaucratic and special interest elite, more interested in protecting those dependent on the state than in promoting economic growth.

The debate over tax reform has, however, demonstrated that the GOP is in no way prepared to take its "populist" stands on social issues—opposition to abortion, support of school prayer—into the arena of economic policy. As originally proposed and sent to Congress by President Reagan, the tax legislation billed by the White House staff as the means to convert the working and lower-middle classes to the Republican party was, in fact, another attempt to lessen the tax burden of the richest Americans. When the Democratic House by the end of last year modified the legislation to restore a progressive distribution, the strongest opponents were House Republicans.

Similarly, on the political front, the Republican drive to press for a realignment among voters has not worked as well as party officials had expected. A $500,000 program last summer to persuade 100,000 Democrats to re-register as Republicans in four states fell far short of the goal. More important, the four most prominent converts to the GOP among Democratic politicians, who together provide a sampler of what was once the Roosevelt-Truman coalition, all now appear unlikely to win governorships: Kent Hance, a Texas redneck by his own description; Edward King, the conservative Massachusetts pol of Irish descent; Robert Martinez, the Hispanic Mayor of Tampa; and William Lucas, black Wayne County executive in Detroit and surrounding suburbs.

Democratic Party

IN ONE RESPECT THE situation of the Democratic party parallels that of the GOP. The withdrawal of Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) from the presidential race will lead to intensified competition for the support of the left in the Democratic primaries, just as the absence of Ronald Reagan leaves the constituencies of the Republican right up for grabs in the GOP.

Democrats are, however, under severely conflicting pressures. One significant wing of the elected leadership—the ad hoc Democratic Leadership Council run by Representative Richard Gephardt of Missouri, Arizona Governor Bruce Babbitt, former Virginia Governor Charles Robb, and Georgia

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Senator Sam Nunn—is attempting to create a moderate-to-right power center in the presidential nomination process. What this generally translates into is a drive to reduce the leverage of blacks, women, and labor. To further this effort, many Democrats are pressing for a Southern regional primary to be held early in 1988, during the week of March 8. This strategy has the strong potential, however, of accomplishing just what the Democrats are attempting to avoid: if, early in the contest, there are still, say, seven or eight serious contenders for the nomination, the one most likely to win the largest number of delegates in a Southern regional primary is Jesse Jackson.

In addition, the emergence of a strong correlation between income and partisan commitment—i.e., the poorer the prospective voter, the more likely he/she is to be a Democrat—has significant consequences for a Democratic party in ideological turmoil. It means that candidates and power centers seeking to push the party toward the right have a strong tendency to disregard, if not repudiate, the strongest Democratic voters: the poor and the black. The Democratic party loses presidential elections for a number of reasons, but two simple ones are that the party fails to persuade the poor and lower-middle classes to turn out, and it fails to win adequate votes among the middle class. Insofar as the Democratic party splits into centrist and Kennedy–Jesse Jackson wings, the two goals of getting more votes from the poor and the middle class become mutually exclusive, and party prospects decline. This kind of conflict exacerbates the Democrats' substantial losses, starting with the independent candidacy of George C. Wallace in 1968, of conservative working and lower-middle-class white voters, alienated from the party by its liberal social agenda, and by a belief that they are the losers under public policies promoting affirmative action, busing, and, in some cases, abortion and equal rights for women.

In this respect, just as both parties are experiencing similar vacuums created by the absence of Reagan and Kennedy as candidates, 1988 is likely to force both parties to address their most severe fissures. For the Democrats, these conflicts are between the middle class and poor, and between the party's liberal elite and white, working-class social conservatives whose economic identification with the party has been frayed, if not broken. For the Republicans, these divisions are between the Eastern establishment wing (currently represented by Bush), the traditional Midwestern wing (Senator Robert Dole), and the new guard seeking to institutionalize a version of the "Reagan Revolution" (Jack Kemp, who claims to represent both cultural and supply-side conservatism).

The Business Community

THIS GROUP, WHICH, WHEN united in 1981, was the single most important force supplying political backing to the Reagan administration's budget and tax cut program, is now severely split. Tax reform legislation has divided American corporations between firms and industries (wholesalers, IBM, high-tech) paying high effective rates of taxation and companies (Chrysler, steel, heavy manufacturers, defense) paying low effective rates or no federal taxes at all. A similar, but not identical split within corporate America has been created by the debate over junk bonds, and the attempts of both the FEC and Congress to regulate the issuing of these financing mechanisms, often used to provide the capital for takeover bids.

In this split, the Reagan administration has generally sided with the high-tax corporations in the debate on tax reform (these companies would sacrifice the investment tax credit and accelerated depreciation in order to lower the top corporate rate), and with the corporate users of junk bonds (many of whom are part of the GOP's affluent base of support in the Sunbelt). These divisions split House and Senate Republicans according to the special interests of their states and districts. The same divisions are true in the case of Democrats, although the party, with its strongest base in the Northeast and Midwest, is more inclined to support low-tax corporate interests from areas with heavy industry.

The persistence of divisive issues within the corporate community suggests that for the time being there will not be a recurrence of the political glory days of business when, in 1981, a unified lobby, through campaign contributions, grass-roots lobbying, and the financing of think tanks, effectively defined tax policy for both parties.

The "Inside-The-Beltway" Right and Left

THE NEW RIGHT, PARTICULARLY THE NETWORK of organizations financed by direct mail specialist Richard Viguerie and those trained by him, has run into hard times. The National Conservative Political Action Committee and the Conservative Caucus have been unable to raise the kind of money they have in the past through direct mail solicitation, and Viguerie spent much of 1985 struggling to stay afloat. A combination of business practices premised on the notion of a continually growing

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marketplace and, more important, of complacence growing from the landslide victory of Ronald Reagan, has helped dry up the conservative fundraising pool of small donors.

Despite financial setbacks, Viguerie, Howard Phillips of the Conservative Caucus, and Paul Weyrich, head of the Free Congress Foundation, have all demonstrated an ability to exercise political muscle, capitalizing on the anxieties of George Bush and Jack Kemp that the conservative movement will somehow repudiate their candidacies.

The religious right in 1984 showed tremendous strength, adding somewhere between two and three million new GOP voters to the rolls. The religious right has not yet, however, shown anywhere near the capacity for permanent political organization of the economic right, which now has such institutions as the Heritage Foundation and the Center for the Study of Public Choice, and which exercises significant power in the Republican party. The Moral Majority has run into hard times, as a low cash flow and negative public perceptions have forced Jerry Falwell to change the organization's name to the more neutral Liberty Federation. The possible entry of Christian Broadcast Network president Marion (Pat) Robertson into the GOP presidential primary contest could split the religious community.

While still conducting what amounts to a rearguard, defensive action, the "issue-based" moderate left-liberal community has experienced a resurgence of financial support. Such organizations as Common Cause, Planned Parenthood, abortion rights groups, and the anti-Moral Majority group, People for the American Way, have all had banner fundraising years. Just as the presence of Reagan in the White House has quieted the enthusiasm of conservative donors, it has inspired liberals. Liberal donors have not, however, been inspired to give to the Democratic party, which experienced an extremely sharp decline in direct mail support after the 1984 election.

The ability of House Democrats to convert Reagan's tax reform proposal into a traditional Democratic bill suggests that there is more political vitality on the economic left than many thought after 1984. Such groups as liberal unions, the Children's Defense Fund, the Center for Budget Priorities, and the labor-financed Citizens for Tax Justice demonstrated an ability to significantly influence the tax debate in a fashion that has not been seen in Washington for over a decade.

In this context, the two key tests of strength for left and right throughout the remainder of this year will be the tax bill, which faces lengthy Senate consideration, and the Gramm-Rudman mandated budget cuts, depending on the outcome of court decisions. Gramm-Rudman has an inherent conservative bias—its function it to reduce the size of the federal government. At the same time, however, it is a wild card with as yet undetermined consequences not only for domestic spending, but also for the defense buildup; for the network of education, mass transit, road, and public works programs benefiting all groups, particularly the middle class; and for the nation's economic stability, contributing to what has become an extremely fluid political and economic situation. □

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Gar Alperovitz

Toward a Tough-Minded Populism

The United States is the wealthiest nation in the history of the world: Were we to divide today's Gross National Product equally among families of four, each would have roughly $65,000. Self-evidently, a much more equitable distribution of resources than our present one is technically possible—even allowing for the current poor functioning of the economy.

Traditional progressive theory—at least as it has operated since the New Deal—has held that a set of liberal ideas and ideals could, through the force of political action, press the overarching corporate economy to achieve goals in the "public interest." The power of the corporation, it was urged, could be limited through regulation and/or breakup via antitrust activity, and the worst features of the economic system ameliorated through tax policy, social expenditures, minimum-wage legislation, the organization (and recognition) of trade unions, and through various health, safety, and environmental requirements.

While important gains have been achieved following this broad approach, it is now clearly facing major difficulties: the corporation and its economic allies have demonstrated their enormous "countervailing" power on virtually every front. Traditional liberal theory occasionally supported alterations in the underlying structure of economic power (for instance, it believed in helping establish co-ops). However, it has had very little to say about fundamental changes in the role of the large corporation.

Populist ideas have the potential of transcending the limitations of traditional progressive thought in general and liberalism in particular. A considerably expanded conception of populism will, however, be required if there is to be a meaningful new politics—for, despite the popularity of the word, there are major obstacles standing in the way of a populist strategy.

In the first instance, populism is very easily focused in "antigovernment" ways—at a time when it is increasingly clear that unless a powerful strategy of government economic management is adopted, ever larger numbers of Americans will be left out of the economic process. Furthermore, on its own terms, populism does not necessarily offer an answer to the deeper structural challenge at the corporate core of the political economy.

We have had eight recessions since World War II; the last reached a record depth of 10.7 percent unemployment. Each decade the average level of unemployment has increased—from 4.5 percent on average during the 1950s to 4.8 percent during the 1960s, to 6.2 percent during the 1970s, to 8 percent on average so far in the 1980s. The figures are roughly double for blacks; and more than double again for black teenagers. Looking beyond the current "recovery," the longer trend is clearly ominous.

Much economic thought these days centers around "industrial policies" to help selected firms and sectors become more competitive. But the likelihood of even the most fully developed industrial policies reversing the trends in our economy is very slim. We are dealing with the fundamental fact that the postwar boom and the conditions that produced it are over.

No longer is the U.S. dominant in a world economy devastated by the conflicts of 1939–45. No longer is there an internal domestic boost of investment from the pent-up demand (and savings) of that war. No longer are the major additional boosts of economic energy from the Korean and

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Vietnam wars able to generate jobs and growth.

It is possible that the U.S. economy will maintain sporadic upward movement; but it is doubtful that this will be achieved in more than marginal ways by the kinds of public policies now being considered. The policy most commonly urged by both parties—reducing the deficit—is also likely to reduce growth; the real question is *when*, not if, the next recession will hit. A major military buildup could do the job, of course, but even here there are difficulties: The $4 trillion economy is so large that it takes a gigantic and absolute military buildup to make a significant dent. Ronald Reagan is right to point out that even his big defense budget is a smaller percentage of the GNP than that of many Democratic presidents—and this means less relative economic stimulus.

Only a full-scale and coordinated economic plan can put the economy into sustained high gear—and only one that has a dramatic new source of public support can overcome the political deadlocks that now stymie progress. As a retired working woman in the Midwest recently put it: "We know that when the politicians want to put everyone to work in time of war they can do it easily. What will it take to do it in time of peace?"

Historically, populism has stressed a sharp division between the haves and have-nots; and it has attacked elites and centralized power. It has been opposed to "big government." It is conceivable—and necessary, I believe—that a new progressive politics will accentuate major themes and programs that would shift resources and power away from the top, but this alone does not answer the fundamental question. Indeed, on its own, such an attack on bigness can easily play into the hands of extreme conservatives and reactionaries; Ronald Reagan has dressed his own new tax package in "populist" garb; and people like Richard Viguerie have offered full-blown political theories of conservative populism based on such themes.

II

THE CENTRAL QUESTION a serious progressive populism must answer is how it will deal with the overall problem of economic management and structure. Else it will end up as just one more effort to change the subject without facing the main question.

If planning is required to manage the modern economy—and I believe that it is, certainly if the trend toward leaving out increasing numbers of blue-collar workers and minorities is to be reversed—then populism must offer a longer-term vision that combines its historic themes of decentralization, antielitism, and antibigness with a model of economic planning designed to achieve its goals and values.

- *The first requirement* is a structure that encourages—and is based upon—increasing participation for all. We have garnered enough experience with co-ops, community development corporations, worker-management, worker-owned firms, and so on, to know that *if there were a real program aimed at developing and extending this experience,* it could offer both greater economic productivity and more democracy. However, consider that hundreds of community-based economic experiments have been wiped away by larger economic forces in the last decade: high interest rates, deep recession, declining markets, and failing local economies have all generated their casualties. Even so-called economic improvements have often been costly—especially when rising real estate values have forced residents to move and thus eliminated the base of some local housing and various co-ops.

Without an overall plan supportive of decentralized, community-based enterprise, even the best experiments are likely to falter and then disappear. Or they will be left to stand as isolated models representing an interesting "moment" in history—of significance to a few activists, but (except as a conversation piece) not to their 238 million fellow citizens. We have almost no experience in this area; nor are we likely to develop a supportive planning approach without self-conscious awareness of the need to transcend our current limited posture. If participation is to be meaningful, there must also be citizen involvement in framing the economic strategy or plan for the community in which a firm exists and for the larger regional and national economy in which both live and die.

This brings us to a further difficulty, one also not easily wished away: the United States is not France, not West Germany, not Japan, and certainly not Sweden, Norway, Denmark, or Austria. We have neither the social-democratic tradition of those countries nor the cohesiveness of an island culture relatively recent in its departure from Oriental feudalism. *We are, above all, a continent.* How, really, can there be participation in overall economic planning in a nation so big? Really? We are talking about 3,000 miles and a population that will be moving toward the 250 million and then the 275 million mark.

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There is a bullet that needs biting: historian William Appleman Williams and advocacy-planner Robert Goodman have put forward the challenging argument that ultimately we need to reconceptualize the nation as a commonwealth of semiautonomous regions. Both because the idea is important in its own right and because there is no alternative, demagogic right-wing politics has an open field: if the "big government" issue has been exploited in part because government *really* is too big, then either we will continue to hack away at it in reactionary fashion—trying to cut down the services it offers and taxes it extracts. Or we will have to make "big government" smaller. Literally. That unit of scale smaller than a nation yet bigger than a state and sufficiently large to deal with overarching economic matters *is a "region."*

If this is so, then a serious populism—one that cares about both progressive and humane values and participation—had better begin to develop a truly regional long-term vision. I am not talking about "bioregionalism," though that idea certainly has a role to play; nor about regional decentralization of the existing federal government, though that too might be a way station on the road to a new economic structure. I am suggesting that the only answer to the conundrum—it will not go away—is a long-term vision of how, specifically and concretely, this great nation might begin to be restructured into semiautonomous regional units capable of managing, under democratic control, the separate regional economies.

The easiest way to think about this initially is to expand a vision of what the existing regional-scale states might do if there were an appropriate strategy: California, Texas, Alaska, New York, all are large enough to be conceived as regional units capable of substantial self-management. In the heart of Central Europe, Austria (population roughly 7.5 million) suggests what can be done by a much smaller "regional"-scale unit of economic governance and planning: its record on jobs, inflation, social programs, economic justice, and environmental balance is remarkable—even though it floats within the ups and downs of a larger, capitalist European market.

It is relatively easy to develop models for community participation, planning, and cooperation within the framework of a larger regionalism. We have useful local experience and a reasonable intellectual tradition to draw upon. (Paul and Percival Goodman's *Communitas* is still one of the best guides.) But the regional problem has merely been broached. A first requirement for those who are serious about a progressive alternative to "big government" is therefore some basic intellectual homework in this area.

• *There is a second requirement* that takes us beyond the traditional populist themes of equity, antielitism, and participation: the United States is the only advanced industrial nation in which the working class is fundamentally, not marginally, divided along racial lines. There are other nations with small immigrant colored populations, but they are nothing like the United States. This has consequences.

We have recently seen how neoconservative politics turns to subtle or not-so-subtle racism when in trouble: the Helms-Hunt Senate race in North Carolina was ugly; and this, in my view, is only the beginning. The most important reason we call 7 percent unemployment a "recovery" is that, for white people, it is. For blacks it is not. But blacks are not well organized; nor is there a serious political alliance between blacks and whites.

We are just about at the end, I believe, of the "soft-gloves" liberalism of the last decade—the political strategy that muffled militancy in the name of a moderate appeal to the middle. Despite the Democratic party's current attempt to look the other way when challenged on social and racial issues, it is clearly a losing politics for the long run. Walter Mondale's decision—after the forceful liberal speeches of Cuomo and Jackson at the 1984 nominating convention—to cut back the Democratic tradition in the name of a "new realism" was instructive. As was his fate. To build the kind of fire in the belly that is needed to break loose from the politics of decay will ultimately require a different, powerful thematic. *A thematic capable of uniting the races against common enemies—one that is capable of withstanding the forthcoming intensification of racism as a strategy to divide and conquer when conservative politicians begin to get into trouble.*

This means drawing a much sharper line between the interests of the vast majority, black and white, and the upper elites, corporations, and the military establishment. Without a clear line, mushy confusion can too easily be exploited by the opposition—and it will be exploited! Several issues are obvious and traditional: tax policy, military spending, corporate control. An aggressive "populist" approach to each could be dramatized, were there a will to do so—as a matter not only of social

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justice but of necessary politics. Beyond this, a serious long-term populism would begin to introduce the ideal of full equality—not merely "equity"—as appropriate to the challenges of the coming century.

Another area, however, is not so obvious but nonetheless crucial: inflation is the issue right-wing politics and governments have historically used to beat down labor, attack social programs, and justify throwing millions of people out of work. Progressives have had no serious answer to inflation, yet it is of central concern to millions of people. You can't beat somebody with nobody. Nor will the conservative tight-money, cut-the-budget answer to inflation do.

The Reagan recession and temporary grain and oil gluts have moderated recent inflation, but the present situation is not stable. During the last 15 years the major sources of rising costs in America have been military spending, oil-price and grain-price explosions, housing-price and medical-cost escalations. To deal with each of these problems over the coming decade will require a tough plan, including: military cutbacks, energy conservation and controls, grain reserves and export management, health-cost controls and alternative health-care delivery systems (preferably under community control), and an expansion of the supply of low- and moderate-income housing. But to implement such plans requires a politics willing to take on the military contractors, the oil companies, the grain exporters, banks and insurance firms and developers, and the hospital-industrial complex.

The control of inflation in sectors of fundamental importance to the average family is a principle that underscores a particular populist emphasis on what is important to produce, and what is important to keep within economic reach of the vast majority. It is also a strategy aimed at avoiding the use of planned recession as the way to control inflation. Finally, it involves a politics designed to deprive the opposition of one of its most important issues: the crude linkage of inflation with social spending, especially for blacks.

At the same time such a strategy could begin to develop a new theme centered around the priority of production for necessity use. It offers a challenge to those institutions and corporations that stand in the way of such a program. *And in so doing, finally, it defines goals and targets, politically, that inherently can help unite black and white in a common struggle.*

If there is neither an alternative economic strategy to deal with inflation nor an alternative, common political target for the anger that is building up among blue-collar and black Americans—when the next burst of price hikes hits, the right-wing attack on the poor, on labor, and on overall higher levels of economic functioning will intensify. And make no mistake about it: the issue is when, not "if," current relative price stability explodes.

Within a planning framework organized around regional semiautonomy, and based upon participation, community involvement, and control of inflation in the necessities of life, the over-arching themes and directions of economic management become self-evident: they are *to manage economic affairs to put people to work to meet these priorities*—and, one might add, to do so in ecologically sane ways. Production of mass-transit systems and solar collectors rather than nuclear reactors and gas guzzlers, for instance, is a logical planning outcome of such criteria.

This brings us back to the role of the large corporation: we need to go beyond traditional ideas of regulation and antitrust. The central question is whether the values of the overall vision are met. We are talking about a longer-term goal of rebuilding the structures needed to sustain, enhance, and encourage both successful economic management and a renewed experience of community. At one point in American history a grass-roots populist conception of how to manage large economic enterprises on a regional basis was put forward—in the very early days of the TVA. This was quickly abandoned or, rather, overridden.

Nonetheless, it is still a useful precedent and concept—for if the large for-profit corporation cannot or will not participate in the building of a new economy, then there must be an alternative to it. Accordingly, the idea of regional public enterprise must be offered—for, again, it is no longer possible, I believe, merely to criticize the major corporations—and the model of regulation and antitrust does not speak to the larger requirements of planning.

III

ULTIMATELY, THERE CANNOT BE a new direction without a political breakthrough. Nor can a new progressive program be achieved without new political energies. We live at a dark moment of American political history: traditional liberalism is stymied; but so, too, in many ways is traditional conservatism in the closing days of the Reagan administration. We shall surely see many empty

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"thematic" approaches to politics—to a politics of surface and rhetoric rather than substance and power. The word "populist" will be degraded by both liberals and conservatives, and emptied of all content.

But even if such a politics succeeds in winning an election, it cannot offer solutions to the problems that beset us—economic, social, moral, military. Hence, ultimately it must fail and the need for a new direction grow. Now is the time to begin a dialogue about what a new populism would entail—one that is serious about values, but also hardheaded about what it takes to manage an advanced industrial economy.

The issue transcends the economy, however, and it also transcends politics as usually conceived. If the final decade of the 20th century promises to be a difficult one, if there is a limit to the pain that people will endure, then we are likely to see violence. And with violence, repression. If the dangerous thrust of American foreign policy is toward intervention, particularly in Latin America, then we are likely to see death and protest, also followed by repression. And there is, finally, the failure of our present politics to deal with the expanding threat of nuclear war.

Traditional politics does not offer answers to any of these challenges—or what answers it offers are usually too little, too late. What is needed is truly a moral equivalent of war, and of the usual response to domestic violence that is war by another name. Without a new source of inspiration, vision, and commitment, the prospects for regaining a progressive initiative are dim.

The development of a tough-minded populism based on a recognition of what it will take to realize and enhance fundamental values is a necessity in its own right. It also may well be that such a vision and strategy is the only way in the coming period to develop enough political energy to transcend our current stalemates, and their sad, dangerous, and ultimately foolhardy domestic and international consequences.

Only a bold alternative has the chance of generating sufficient emotional power to achieve this goal. Several years ago conservatives realized this at a time of set-back in their own politics: difficult as it was (and as high as the short-term costs were) they broke with mushy attempts to adjust politics to early compromise and cautious interest-group brokering. Such a course has the central advantage of maintaining principles—and thereby offering an appeal based both on moral clarity and a tough-minded assessment of what it will take to achieve basic goals.

Various groups, particularly among the religiously oriented, are beginning to understand the importance of such integrity, and are organizing themselves accordingly. Though it is not a strategy for the faint-hearted who can only function in the easier environment of "instant-gratification politics," it is the only approach likely to get us beyond the impasse presented by a dying liberalism and neoliberalism that are nuzzling ever closer to conservative ideas in the name of politics as usual. □

This article was written for "The New Populism: The Politics of Empowerment," a forthcoming book edited by Harry Boyte and Frank Riessman, to be published by Temple University Press in late 1986.

AT FIRST GLANCE *(Continued from p. 132)*

prickly ambivalence toward would-be benefactors that marks the attitude of intellectuals. But the caution imposed by the tradition tends to be swamped by the conservative intellectual's commitments, because they predispose him to see those who are ready to support him as representing benign social forces. Thus he is more apt to reciprocate with a warm embrace of his own, without even the matching reserve and suspicion lying beneath the surface of his welcome.

And thus many conservative intellectuals now become ensconced in the established order. Its peace is to be preserved, and the *raison d'être* is to be a guardian of its gates. They still remain committed persons, but their role within that order is now rather more ambiguous. □

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George Kateb

Nuclear Weapons and Individual Rights

In a poem called "Fall 1961," Robert Lowell wrote:

> All autumn, the chafe and jar
> of nuclear war;
> we have talked our extinction to death.

These words, provoked by a Berlin crisis, suggest that it is possible to kill a subject by anguished attention; indeed to kill even a subject that is not a subject in the conventional sense at all.

Even this subject, is infinitely more than a subject—the subject of human extinction—can become yet another source of boredom. It is not simply that anxiety from its very nature often gives way to boredom, or at least to an effort to become bored, so as not to let anxiety give way in turn to despair. It is also the case that the subject of human extinction lends itself more than any other to language that fails.

Lowell's few lines may escape that condemnation: they are memorable. The irony is that, of course, they do not discuss extinction; they only name it. They have a powerful indirectness: talk about the failure of talk. It may be, however, that this very indirectness is a great poet's way of instructing us in the foolhardiness of trying to say something about the subject of human extinction that does not kill it by boredom.

Still, such foolhardiness is needed. The subject that is not a subject must be discussed;

> ". . . the doctrine of no-use excludes any first or retaliatory or later use, whether sizable or not. No-use is the imperative derived from the possibility of extinction."

words about it must be produced. We must reject the advice of those who in brief and undeniably interesting sentences advise us to keep quiet, so that we do not reveal the nuclear situation's true absurdity and thus somehow make the worst more likely to happen. Allow that most of the thousands of words one has read on the encompassing theme of nuclear weapons, and the fewer words on the specific theme of human extinction, fail. They tend to be boring, even when well written. One often notices, as well, a recurrent unsteadiness in nuclear discourse: writers seem to regret what they said earlier or to lose or bury their point, or change their minds without seeming to notice. Yet we could not do without much of this writing. The deficiencies themselves teach lessons.

Even when the specific theme of human extinction is left aside, the plain fact is that the whole subject of nuclear weapons resists the effort of translation into language that is alive.

This article is a revised version of the first of three lectures given at Princeton University under the auspices of the Christian Gauss Seminary in Criticism, on the subject of Human Extinction and Moral Philosophy. I wish to thank the director, Victor Brombert, and his committee for their kind invitation; and the members of the Seminar for their warm response and vigorous skepticism — G.K.

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The weapons are hidden; their effects on the two occasions of their use are scarcely assimilable; the theory of the possession and possible future uses of these weapons is often technical or arcane, and it is probably infected with jargon so as to discourage public discourse; the nuclear situation is covered over, in many parts, by secrets.

The whole subject is distant, invisible, unreal, except in an occasional moment of crisis. The subject of extinction, the subject that is infinitely more than a subject, is thus wrapped in the encompassing subject of nuclear weapons, which often emerges as less than a subject; or, at most, as one more subject, one more item of policy in an immeasurable thicket of policies, foreign and domestic, that press for attention. To say it again, foolhardiness is needed. Praise to those who have succeeded in not killing the subject of human extinction, who have not, to begin with, made the whole subject of nuclear weapons just another issue.

THOUGH A GOOD NUMBER OF WRITERS help us understand the nuclear situation, only a few have manifestly set out with the sense that unless they made special efforts their language would fail them, fail their subject, fail us. I do not mean to read off an honor roll. But I must single out, at the start, one book, Jonathan Schell's *The Fate of the Earth*, published in 1982. I would claim for this book the distinction of giving greater life to the subject of nuclear weapons than any other. The key to Schell's success is that he makes human extinction the center of the whole subject. He is not the first to do so. As far as I can tell, Günther Anders, the distinguished German philosopher, is the one who first insisted that adequacy to the subject required dwelling on the possibility of human extinction. But it is Schell, writing as a citizen of the first nuclear state, who has had the great effect on opinion.

Of course, not all who read the book praise it; indeed, some have complained about its prose, as if to say that Schell, more than most, "talks our extinction to death." I simply disagree with this adverse judgment. In disagreeing I acknowledge that there can be no common agreement on what words actually do give life to the theme. I would hazard the view, however, that anyone who thinks that moral philosophy has a place in the discussion of the whole subject of nuclear weapons is very likely to find Schell's book of tremendous value. Any moral philosophy is bound to place human extinction at the center of nuclear discourse.

In making human extinction the center, Schell is trying to force us to abandon the usual way of considering the subject. He is persuaded, even if he does not say it in so many words, that we cannot just inch up to the nuclear situation, so to speak. Because this situation is radically discontinuous with all other past and present dangers, those who think about it must create a break with any discourse that tends to make the nuclear situation resemble, or resemble too closely, any other danger or predicament.

So far are common sense and policy discourse from being adequate, they falsify the subject. At whatever risks, the writers must take the subject away—at least for a while—from common sense and policy discourse, and entrust it to philosophy, to the capacity of philosophy to disclose the obvious, to reveal the obvious, which otherwise remains hidden and obscure in the unreal familiarity inflicted on it by common sense and policy discourse.

Philosophy instigates a rupture and then tries to redefine the field. This is Schell's endeavor. At the same time—and I know it may sound frivolous to make this admission—he helps to enlarge moral philosophy. He compels its attention to a subject that, long before, professional philosophers should have addressed. Again, this success depends on the theme of human extinction. By bringing the nuclear predicament into conjunction with moral philosophy his words give a new urgency to both. Schell thus helps to open up the subject for exploration.

I would like to be able to show that, most generally, in the midst of the nuclear situation, individualism is easily the most powerful idealism, the one most able, when taken seriously, to elicit, articulate, and justify resistance; in the first instance, resistance to common sense and policy discourse. The moral doctrine of individualism, in some of its principal components is, I

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believe, the doctrine for the nuclear age. The origins of most but not all its important components lie in 17th-century Protestant England and America; its career has been continuous in the English-speaking world (and elsewhere) since that time. Its influence has been preponderantly, if not purely, benign. I would like to be able to show, however, that its greatest benignity, its profoundest mission, is to be the most adequate idealism in a world radically discontinuous with the one in which individualism was born.

The usual view is that individualism, in any version and in all its components, is obsolete, and that, when it is held on to in spite of the fact that the modern world is so different from the one in which individualism was born and perhaps played a benign part, it becomes obstructive and hence dangerous. Most of those who are sensitive to the radical discontinuity of the present time in relation to all preceding generations claim that the only adequate idealism must be collectivist. I think they are seriously wrong. My hope is to suggest some of the ways in which individualism holds within itself some great philosophical resources needed in the struggle to see the nuclear predicament truly and to protest and resist its perpetuation.

Put briefly, part of my aim is to suggest that certain individualist ideas in the realm of political theory (one sector of moral philosophy) point to the conclusion that no use of any nuclear weapon, of any size, for any purpose, by any country, is morally permissible, and that those responsible for any use forfeit their right to remain in office, even where they duly hold office in a legitimate government. The abstract right of resistance, founded in individualist ideas, vindicates the effort to remove the office-holders responsible for the use. Derivative from this contention is the right of other governments and people to compel forfeiture when prudence allows, if the citizens of the responsible government do not or cannot move. These elements comprise the no-use doctrine.

On the other hand, I would like, in other papers, to begin the effort of showing that the relation to human and natural existence that individualism sponsors best conduces to the will to preserve that existence in the face of the possibility of its nuclear extinction. The metaphysical aspirations intrinsic to certain forms of individualism, if taken to heart, fortify persons in the task of overcoming within themselves all that cooperates with the possibility of extinction.

THE HIGHEST WORTH OF SCHELL'S BOOK lies in his insistence that we should all contemplate the nuclear situation from the perspective of possible human extinction, and be overcome by the obligation, no matter what, to try to avoid human extinction. Yet as Schell says, human extinction (as well as the extinction of most species in nature) is not the intention of anyone in power. What must be seen is that the absolute end can come about even though no one intends it. "We can do it," he says, "only if we don't quite know what we're doing."

Schell's work attempts to force on us an acknowledgment that sounds far-fetched and even ludicrous; an acknowledgment that the possibility of extinction is carried by any use of nuclear weapons, no matter how limited or how seemingly rational or morally justified. He himself acknowledges that there is a difference between possibility and certainty. But in a matter that is more than a matter, more than one practical matter in a vast series of practical matters, in the "matter" of extinction, we are obliged to treat a possibility—a genuine possibility—as a certainty. Humanity is not to take any step that contains even the slightest risk of extinction.

The doctrine of no-use is based on the possibility of extinction. Schell's perspective transforms the subject. He takes us away from the arid stretches of strategy and asks us to feel continuously, if we can, and feel keenly if only for an instant now and then, how utterly distinct the nuclear world is. Nuclear discourse must vividly register that distinctiveness. It is of no moral account that extinction may be only a slight possibility. No one can say how great the possibility is, but no one has yet credibly denied that by some sequence or other a particular use of nuclear weapons *may* lead to human and natural extinction. If it is not impossible it must be treated as certain: the loss signified by extinction nullifies all calculations of probability as it nullifies all calculations of costs and benefits.

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Abstractly put, the connections between any use of nuclear weapons and human and natural extinction are several. Most obviously, a sizable exchange of strategic nuclear weapons can, by a chain of events in nature, lead to the earth's uninhabitability, to "nuclear winter," or to Schell's "republic of insects and grass." But the consideration of extinction cannot rest with the possibility of a sizable exchange of strategic weapons. It cannot rest with the imperative that a sizable exchange must not take place.

A so-called tactical or "theater" use, or a so-called limited use, is also prohibited absolutely, because of the possibility of immediate escalation into a sizable exchange; or because, even if there were not an immediate escalation, the possibility of extinction would reside in the precedent for future use set by any use whatever in a world in which more than one power possesses nuclear weapons; in the contagious effect on nonnuclear powers who may feel compelled by a mixture of fear and vanity to try to acquire their own weapons, thus increasing the possibility of use by increasing the number of nuclear powers; and in the unleashed emotions of indignation, retribution, and revenge that, if not acted on immediately in the form of escalation, can be counted on to seek expression later.

Other than full strategic uses are not confined, no matter how small the explosive power: each would be a cancerous transformation of the world. All nuclear roads lead to the possibility of extinction. It is true by definition, but let us make it explicit: the doctrine of no-use excludes any first or retaliatory or later use, whether sizable or not. No-use is the imperative derived from the possibility of extinction.

By containing the possibility of extinction any use is tantamount to a declaration of war against humanity. It is not merely a war *crime* or a *crime* against humanity. Such a war is waged by the user of nuclear weapons against every human individual as individual (present and future); not as citizen of this or that country. It is not only a war against the country that is the target. To respond with nuclear weapons, where possible, only increases the chances of extinction and can never, therefore, be allowed. The use of nuclear weapons establishes the right of any person or group, acting officially or not, violently or not, to try to punish those responsible for the use. The aim of the punishment is to deter later uses, and thus to try to reduce the possibility of extinction, if, by chance, the particular use in question did not directly lead to extinction. The form of the punishment cannot be specified. Of course the chaos ensuing from a sizable exchange could make punishment irrelevant. The important point, however, is to see that those who use nuclear weapons are criminals, and at the least forfeit their offices.

John Locke, a principal individualist political theorist, says that in a state of nature every individual retains the right to punish transgressors or assist in the effort to punish them, whether or not one is a direct victim. Transgressors convert an otherwise tolerable condition into a state of nature that is a state of war in which all are threatened. Analogously, the use of nuclear weapons, by containing in an immediate or delayed manner the possibility of extinction, is in Locke's phrase "a trespass against the whole species," and places the users in a state of war with all people. And people, the accumulation of individuals, must be understood as of course always indefeasibly retaining the right of self-preservation, and hence morally allowed, indeed enjoined, to take the appropriate preserving steps.

As Locke wrote to educate people in the always radical belief that they are entitled to resist rulers who refuse to acknowledge basic individual rights, so we today must try to use the possibility of human extinction to alert each other to the new threat, a threat more dire than any Locke could have imagined. Locke thought that popular attitudes were the ultimate deterrent of tyranny, and that only if people were used to entertaining a deep suspicion of their own inclination to docility would rulers think hard before asserting absolutist and arbitrary claims.

In the nuclear age, the deterrent effect of popular attitudes is much harder to estimate. And what, after all, could possibly serve as a deterrent, not to meditated policy but to a calamitous decision made by one or a few in a moment of rage or horror or panic or fear or confusion? Nevertheless, every effort must be

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made to cultivate the sense, and to disseminate it, and perhaps spread it upward to office-holders, that using nuclear weapons puts users at war against the world, including the citizens of their own country.

No nuclear power has publicly taken into account, except casually and perhaps cynically, the possibility of extinction contained in any use whatever of nuclear weapons. Official rhetoric refers to massive casualties and massive destruction as the maximally worst possible outcome, and then almost always as a result of a sizable exchange, not as a result of escalation from a special or limited use. We cannot say whether one day official rhetoric will systematically incorporate the perspective of extinction, and do so for some purpose other than justifying an intensified arms race. For the time being, let us assume that the possibility of extinction will be mostly ignored, or even derided, as Sidney Hook, for one, has already derided it. If that must be the case, then so be it.

Citizens, however, may find in the perspective of extinction a powerful impetus to think about the nuclear situation, and to act as they can. But even they need not argue about whether extinction is a possibility. This is my crucial point. Citizens may, instead, challenge the right of any government, their own included, to threaten or to inflict massive casualties and destruction, or to act so as to risk or actually bring on such casualties and destruction to their own people. Citizens would insist, contrary to official nuclear doctrine, that a special or limited use is as unacceptable as a sizable use, because the potentiality of a sizable use is present in the other kinds. But beyond that, there is no need for further insistence on a point that governments ignore or deride—that is, the possibility of extinction.

All that citizens have to do is to focus on massive casualties and massive destruction. A theoretical barrier to such casualties and destruction is simultaneously a barrier to the nuclear source of the possibility of extinction (to leave aside such sources as biological and chemical warfare). Here then—in the possibility of massive disaster—is the theoretical battleground. And this is where the moral doctrine of individualism makes its contribution.

Individualism is the name of many moral ideas. It would be a hopeless task to try to give it a tidy meaning. I mean to refer especially, at this point in our discussion, to moral-political ideas enunciated during the Puritan Revolution in England and in the next generation, ideas that naturally undergo both expansion and refinement in succeeding generations, in England and America. The hard theoretical work of moral-political individualism in the 17th century is done by the Levellers, Hobbes, and Locke. These figures are diverse, and looked at in retrospect they appear in contention with each other, whether or not they were or could have been aware of each other. Yet later generations can and did bring them in relation, and picked and chose elements from their thought, and worked on them and added to them. I would assert that some individualist ideas found in 17-century English thought (which turns out to be Protestant in sensibility even where it is not Protestant in faith) alone underlie and inform the correct principles of political legitimacy, and that these principles are, in turn, the very principles of the American Constitution.

The American political system, as specified by the Constitution, is thus one case of political legitimacy. Or, at least, the rules and procedures specified in the Constitution accord perfectly with the principles of legitimacy, even if the American actuality, for one sort of large reason or other, shows only an imperfect, even though substantial, legitimacy. I believe that the specifications and the actuality, in fact, show a closer approximation to legitimacy than any other political system in the world. In any case, the point is that official nuclear policy violates the principles of legitimate government. Included in this overall contention is the consideration, advanced with great skill by Richard Falk and supplemented by Jeremy Stone, that the formulation and possible execution of nuclear policy is inherently undemocratic because it is substantially removed from the public political process, and is constitutionally infirm because it supposes overriding executive power. I wish to reach to the individualist substratum of these arguments, and to their frame.

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What is legitimate government? By definition a government that is *entitled* to make laws and policies, that is, to make regulations binding on all people in a society. Legitimacy is found when the form of government is such as to give as much assurance as is humanly possible that it can serve the ends for which government exists and which only government can serve. What are the ends? The ends are one end, only one end: to acknowledge and protect the rights of individuals. Only that government is legitimate that by its form gives assurance that it will acknowledge and protect the rights of individuals. In modern life, representative and constitutionally limited government gives, or is supposed to give, that assurance.

One may distinguish simply between personal and political rights. The former are listed abstractly in the Bill of Rights or derived from it. They are rights of mind, expression, movement, activity, and association; and rights that pertain to suspects, defendants, and prisoners. Political rights involve the rights to vote and hold office.

THE THEORETICAL WORK on individual rights, done in the 17th century, contained the basic claims, the basic arguments and, equally important, the articulation of the basic sense of human dignity that permeates the claims and arguments. The literature is rich in concepts and formulations. Just to mention a few:

- the Levellers' insistence that every person has the equal right to be taken into account, and to count for one, and to be given an accounting, when regulations supposed to bind him are being discussed and enacted;
- Hobbes's conception of the unrenounceable right to self-preservation, his notion of the right of every individual to transfer allegiance if his safety depends on it, his emphasis on the moral priority of avoiding premature, violent death, and his manifest reluctance to vindicate conscription;
- Locke's notion of having property in oneself, his notion of the person as including one's motions, actions, and exertions.
- Further, the idea that political society is founded in an agreement of individuals made for the sake of acknowledging and protecting rights—rather than in a sacralized inertia or inheritance, or in kinship or ethnicity or any other nonindividualist mode—is crucial to all three political theories.

I do not say that any of these ideas is free of the need for elaboration, adaptation, revision, or correction. That work has been going on since the first statements of the 17th century; it continues with great vitality today. What I mean to suggest is that as long as we take the problem of political legitimacy seriously, and as long as we take the American Constitution as the specification of a legitimate form of government, we will be taking the individualism of individual rights seriously. And in doing that we enable our challenge to nuclear policy.

I have rehearsed platitudes. The justification is that these platitudes of individualism are not really platitudes. They are fundamental considerations that can wither through complacent or irritable inattention. In their withering, the way is eased for massive ruin and for the possibility of extinction. From these considerations—presumably the considerations that guide our lives—the absolute impermissibility of using nuclear weapons emerges. Individualism in the form of personal and political rights bars a government whose legitimacy rests on acknowledging and protecting those rights from acting in any way that risks or causes massive ruin at home or that threatens or inflicts it abroad.

The emphasis is on the death of millions of individuals. The subjects of illegitimate governments—for example, the people of the Soviet Union—are covered equally by this imperative: the claim to individual rights is not a confined, parochial matter, but universalist in nature. Even though their own government does not acknowledge and protect rights, any legitimate government must do so insofar as it can. (Michael Walzer has already made this point in *Just and Unjust Wars* [Basic Books, 1977].) Above all, in dealing with foreigners, massive ruin must not be inflicted. Thus not only do the theory of the just war and elementary notions of common humanity disallow any policy that risks or causes massive ruin, but the

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underlying moral principles of the American political system *independently* do so as well.

If officials of a legitimate government use nuclear weapons or threaten to do so, and whether or not the people suffer retaliation, the officials have so grossly violated the principles of the system that they must be understood as having intended its moral destruction, and therefore to have created a situation in which a revolution against them is abstractly justified in behalf of the very system they have subverted. They are the real revolutionaries.

Notice what underlies the pretended right to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons. In the case of the United States, government rhetoric invokes freedom as the value that may be defended by nuclear weapons. Freedom is the term used to refer to all those rights to which the American Constitution is devoted. Yet how can there be consistent faith in rights when masses of people become passive victims? American citizens would not be *acting* to defend their freedom; they would simply be enlisted in mass death. Further, how can there be consistent faith in rights when mass death is inflicted on others? The theory of rights recognizes no difference between one's fellows and foreigners as far as negative moral entitlements are concerned: everyone has an equal claim not to have rights violated, even if positive claims to increased well-being may be nationally confined. If political freedom institutionally survived the use of nuclear weapons, its essence would have been spiritually maimed, perhaps destroyed irretrievably. The users of nuclear weapons would have engaged in a revolution against freedom.

But I think that there is a much deeper passion than a concern for freedom that underlies the pretended right to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons. It is a passion common to authorities and establishments of all states, whether they possess nuclear weapons or not. It is a passion that has come to infect even the office-holders in American democracy, even apart from nuclear policy, as if accession to office or position were like drinking from the river of forgetfulness—forgetfulness of the moral meanings of constitutional democracy. The modern energies fueling this passion are immense. The best name for the passion or the mentality is appropriately a foreign name and, also appropriately, a French one: *étatisme*. The English translation, statism, is rather pale and not at home in the language. Still, let us use it, all the while hearing *étatisme*. All executive and administrative officials, or almost all, tend to be statists, whether they are initially disposed to be, or only become so after a while in office.

The constitutional tragedy is that the American political system has always been animated by a dread of statism, and by a calculated effort, reinforced by strong common feelings, to avoid its importation from the Old World. "State" is not a constitutional word; its conventional use has been confined to foreign policy, where the United States is one sovereign entity in a world of sovereign entities. The conventional use is totally dissimilar from statism. Thus when we notice the presence of statism, overt or implicit, in the rationalizations of nuclear policy offered by American officials, we are thrown into a world not recognized by the Constitution. Put most broadly, it is not a world recognized by the moral ideas that underlie and inform the principles of political legitimacy. Statism is totally at war with the culture and practice of individual personal and political rights.

WHAT IS STATISM? From a broad range of possible meanings, we may confine ourselves for the moment to the sense present in nuclear rhetoric. Let us say that this statism is the belief that a government is not a mere government but a state and that as such, it is the locus of identity of a society; that it is not only distinct from but above society; that it has rights (not merely duties); that its survival can be secured at any cost to its own society or to others. We ordinarily associate such thinking with absolute monarchy, or with modern party and military dictatorships. We certainly do not think that such a belief is compatible with our Constitution or with the moral ideas connected with political legitimacy in general. Statism is a vision of life in which people are means to the end of the survival of power, with society understood as one great quasi-military organization or power-base, and the state as not only its leadership, but also its reason for being.

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Officials may not recognize their rhetoric and themselves in this description. But I do not see what the expressed determination to risk or engage in a sizable exchange of nuclear weapons could mean except that the idea of statism has been accepted. This point becomes especially evident when we see that American nuclear rhetoric explicitly refers to a protracted nuclear war, and thus to the readiness to accept massive numbers of American deaths. Even if we choose to leave aside the rhetoric concerning limited or special nuclear uses, and also to leave aside the massive numbers of deaths in other countries, we are compelled to take in the fact that the American government says it is willing to have the American people endure countless deaths.

This, in turn, can only mean that officials think that as long as the executive upper echelons survive intact, and with them a corps of military and police, all else that is needed is enough people left alive to supply the means necessary for the government—that is, the state—and its purposes. Its purpose is one: to remain and continue to bear the true existence and meaning of society, even when millions have been passively victimized unto death. I do not see what other implication can be drawn from any rationalization of the use of nuclear weapons in a sizable exchange. If we insist that even a so-called special or limited use carries with it the immediate or delayed possibility of escalation, then we simply say that the rationalization of any use of nuclear weapons is the most extreme form of statism, and therefore is the most extreme form of illegitimate or anti-Constitutionalist doctrine.

Individualist moral ideas, as they get translated into political theory, preponderantly allow for conscripted participation, if necessary, for the common defense. But the object of defense in American terms is the Constitution. The Constitution, if it is understood in a way that stays faithful to the moral ideas of individualism that underlie and inform it, certainly does not allow millions of individuals to be passively sacrificed for any purpose. Such sacrifice is no part of any agreement between consenting individuals, no part of the social contract that creates and sustains a legitimate structure of government. Government is guilty of genocide committed against its people when it causes passive multitudes to die. Acceptable sacrifice, on the other hand, is what preserves the rights of individuals, and if some die, they are supposed to die with the sense that without their sacrifice the rights of their fellows—all of whom share the risk equally—could have been lost.

The social contract allows only defensive war for the sake of rights. (A hypothetical war to compel foreign officials who have used nuclear weapons to leave office is a derivation from this conception.) When the purpose is to defend the state at whatever cost, then one should say that nuclear doctrine has passed altogether out of the sphere of our political theory. If the use of nuclear weapons would be a revolution against the Constitution, the rationalization before the use is, in itself, an abstract revolution against it. I believe that only a renewed insistence on the individualist basis of legitimate government can begin to dismantle the nuclear rhetoric of American officials.

On the other hand, it may be said that the implicit meaning of this rhetoric is not, Let society perish as long as the state survives, but, Even if millions die the people lives on. Thus the survival of the government is here conceived as only the means to the continuation of the people, but the people is not simply the numerous individuals who comprise it. The people is the flow of generations who possess a constant identity, derived perhaps from kinship or ethnicity or race or religion or culture or history or some other bond preexistent to any individual and meant to outlast every individual. Indeed the meaning of an individual life is supposed to come from incorporation into a body that has a supraindividual existence and destiny.

Now, when the matter is put thus, it soon becomes apparent that such a way of conceiving of a people does not answer to American experience. Even more than statism this conceptualization is alien, of the Old World. Just as American government is not a state, so the American people are not a body. The American collective identity exists only through the Constitution, understood as an agreement of

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consenting individuals, who give their consent as they grow up into adult citizenship.

The ties of citizenship are not mystical or transcendental. An association of strangers and immigrants is made civil by adherence to the idea and practices of individual rights. Individuals never lose their identity as individuals; they are never transformed into mere members or parts of a totality. Their relations are fundamentally abstract, even though entailing severe sacrifices on necessary occasions. If I have to die in doing my duty, I nevertheless am the one who dies. I die my own death. I must therefore eschew the idolatry that consists in thinking that I survive in a supraindividual body. I must eschew folk-mystique.

The agreement, the social contract, is made and sustained for the sake of individual rights. We do not exist for each other; that truly means that we all do not exist for the sake of a mystique. We owe each other respect for rights, with all the duties attaching to such respect. If one gives up everything, it is not for the people, but for the rights of other individuals, including the unborn.

In truth, folk-mystique is so theoretically repellent in an American context that we need not make the effort of determining whether it may be the underlying meaning of official nuclear rhetoric. At the same time, unfortunately, it is clear that other nuclear powers (or possible or potential ones) share to varying degrees in folk-mystique. I would simply say that this tendency constitutes a fertile source of the possibility of extinction. As long as some groups of people feel that no matter how many of them die, as long as some survive the people survives—and that, furthermore, a people is what it is by contrast with others, with other peoples—the road to massive ruin and to possible extinction is more easily traveled.

The strength of folk-mystique decreases with the strength of the moral ideas of individualism. Individualist forms of self-love may help to check the horrors of group self-love. The extension of this point is to say that, just as the idea of the state, where it exists in a constitutionally limited representative democracy is a serious and perhaps fatal predemocratic impurity, so the idea of the people is a pernicious atavism.

The moral ideas that underlie and inform the political system that is acclaimed as the only legitimate one in the modern age—namely, constitutionally limited representative democracy—exclude absolutely both sets of superstition. From a long historical perspective, individualist ideas are recent and hence seem odd or aberrant. But we might say that they have come just in time. If taken seriously they erect theoretical barriers (alongside those of common humanity and the theory of just war) to the right of any would-be legitimate government to claim that it can ever use nuclear weapons. It is theoretically enough that any use is likely to lead to sizable uses, and that sizable uses cause massive ruin.

That massive ruin carries with it the possibility of human extinction gives citizens the most drastic incentive to resist all policies that lead to massive ruin and death, even though, so far, government apologists and others deny or deal cynically with such a possibility. Well, then, let us engage nuclear doctrine on the subject of massive ruin. Of course, theories by themselves cannot act, but action is always imbued with theory in some rough form or other, and with the feelings and passions that are aroused by theory and that, to begin with, help to arouse theory. The point is to try to remind people in all democracies that their very principles—ultimately individualist—must, if taken seriously and purely, set them in opposition to all governments, including their own, especially their own, when they claim the right to use nuclear weapons.

I have said that statism is one of the main ideas that are implied in official (and lay) rhetoric rationalizing the use of nuclear weapons. But the role of statism in the nuclear situation is not confined to this function. In another form it makes another contribution. The form is best called—once again a French name is most apt—*dirigisme*, the unremitting direction by the state of all facets of life. Let us translate the word as "state-activism." The contribution is indirect but insidious and pervasive, and consists of the general tendency to leave citizens in a condition of dependence that borders on helplessness. The virulent practitioners of

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state-activism are, of course, the police-state, tyranny, despotism, and totalist rule in all their varieties.

Whenever a nuclear power is also one of the latter regimes, then the disposition among a compliant population is to get used to the idea that the state, as the source of practically all benefits and penalties—all those outside the intimate sphere and many inside it—has the right to dispose of the fate of the people in any way it sees fit. The way it sees fit seems the unavoidable way. Such compliance strengthens the readiness of officials to think seriously about using nuclear weapons. Just as the people are used to the idea that the state has the right to dispose of their fate, so the state gets used to the idea that it may even use nuclear weapons in disposing of its people's fate.

My concern here, however, is not with the mentality of unfree societies, but rather with that of democratic societies. I would like to propose the idea—it is no more than a hypothesis—that the growth of state-activism in a democracy is the growth, as well, of that compliance creating and resting on dependence that makes it easier for the government to think of itself as a state—but not only in our earlier sense of an entity whose survival is held to be equivalent to the survival of society itself, but in the related but separate sense of an entity that is indispensable to all relations and transactions in society.

The state, in this conceptualization, is the life of society in its normal workings, the main source of initiative, response, repair, and redress. Society lives by its discipline, which is felt mostly as benign, and which is often not felt as discipline or felt at all. The government becomes all-observant, all-competent; it intervenes everywhere; and as new predicaments arise in society, it moves first to define and attempt a resolution of them. My proposed idea is that as this tendency grows—and it is already quite far advanced—people will, to an increasing degree, come to accept the government as a state. The tendency of executive officials (and some in the legislative and judicial branches) to conceive of government as a state will thus be met by the tendency of people to accept that conception. People's dependence on it will gradually condition their attitudes and their sentiments. Looking to it, they must end by looking up to it.

I believe the "logic" of this tendency, as we say, is that officials become confirmed in their sense that they, too (like their counterparts in unfree societies), may dispose of the fate of the people. Entrusted with so much everyday power, the entire corps of officials must easily find confirmation for the rationalization of the use of nuclear weapons proposed by the foreign-policy sector of officialdom.

There may be a strong, if subterranean, bond between the state as indispensable to all relations and transactions in everyday society, and the state as entitled to dispose of the fate of society in nuclear war, even though officials receive no explicit confirmation of this bond by the people. Under pressure, however, a people that habitually relies on the state may turn into a too easily mobilizable population: mobilizable but otherwise immobile. My further sense is that a renewed understanding of the moral ideas of individualism is vital to the effort to challenge state-activism.

I say this, knowing that some aspects of individualism do help to push democratic government in the direction of becoming a state, and to push the state into state-activism. Tocqueville's prescient analysis of democratic despotism must never be forgotten. Even more important, we must not forget that he thought that democratic despotism was much more likely in those democracies in which individualism was narrowly or weakly developed, and in which, therefore, the power of a full moral individualism had never corroded the statist pretensions of political authority. His anxiety was for France and the Continent, not for America. Thus, following Tocqueville, we may say that *anti*-individualism provides no remedy for the deficiencies: the remedy is to be sought from individualism itself.

One task of a renewed and revised individualism is to challenge everyday state-activism. Remote as the connection may seem, the encouragement of state-activism, or the failure to resist it, contributes to nuclear statism, and thus to the disposition to accept and inflict massive ruin and, with that, the unwanted and denied possibility of extinction. In the nuclear situation, one must be attentive to even remote

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connections that may exist between human activity and human extinction.

There are no certainties of analysis on these possible connections. And so far the worst speculative connection is not exemplified in American society. I only mean to refer to the hypothesis offered independently first by Hannah Arendt and then by Michel Foucault; namely, that where the state is regarded both by itself and by the population not as a mere protector of life against domestic or foreign violence but as the source of contented and adjusted and regularized life (through its welfarist policies and other interventions), it is subtly empowered to take the next step and become the source of mass death. What it gives it can take away, like God. But though still short of this extreme, American society is full of serious tendencies of state-activism that indirectly cooperate with the possibility of extinction.

By continuously expanding the scope of governmental activity, these tendencies work against one of the principal constituent elements of individualism, the idea that each person should be subject to the smallest possible amount of government regulation that goes beyond insuring the obligation that binds individuals as well as the government: the acknowledgment of and respect for rights. Indeed, the protection of rights and the restriction of governmental activity are jointly at the service of a free life.

One's life is not supposed to be arranged or designed by government nor have meaning or coherence given to it by government; nor is one supposed to be helped too much, or saved from oneself, or looked at closely or continuously. One is supposed to be free, autonomous, self-reliant. Individual rights are not always abridged when government acts to substitute itself for the individual and tries to lead our lives for us. Government may abide by the constitutional limitations on itself, and nevertheless fill up too many vacant places in a person's life, thus leaving too little raw material out of which a person develops on his or her own. This ideal of free being is under relentless attack; but the attack could not score its successes unless we cooperated. In cooperating we forget the ideal, or let preliminary aspects of it, like the pursuit of interests and self-regarding claims, exhaustively define the whole ideal. The very notion of rights becomes bloated because of obsession with interests and claims and turns false to itself.

Resistance must be offered from within the ideal, not from collectivism or communitarianism, which are both on the side of making a people systematically docile and ready for mobilization. Even if nuclear weapons did not exist, and there were no possibility of extinction, the fight against state-activism would have to be carried on. But the link between state-activism and extinction suggests itself, and a cultivated individualism must be enlisted against such activism and in behalf of avoiding massive ruin and the possibility of extinction.

We may distinguish several kinds of inspiration to state-activism. Each has numerous sources, some of them commendable, some petty or sordid, some of them arising from society, some instigated by the power-interest of public bureaucracies. All look like responses to genuine, sometimes profound problems. All of them seem plausible and are perfectly understandable. Yet all of them conduce to transforming government into the state, and getting people into the habit of looking up to it. The individualist disdain, the well-bred contempt for authority—I do not mean complacent cynicism—is gradually forgotten. All these tendencies are therefore at the service of a potentially lethal dependence and compliance. All help to furnish the mental universe in which the official mentality of nuclear statism is at home, and hence unwittingly and maybe even paradoxically prepare the way for massive ruin and the possibility of extinction.

I wish to mention not particular policies, and the motives and interests behind them, but some main ideas that inspire the policies that give state-activism its fields of intervention. Among these disaster-laden ideas are:

- ecological holism or humanism: the view that the state must treat society as one great source of excess, waste, and pollution;
- society as discipline: the view that the state exists to transform superfluous or otherwise

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ungovernable masses into docile and productive creatures;

- paternalism: the view that the state is expected to remain indifferent to no sort of behavior, no matter how private, but must endorse what it does not penalize, and become the moral parent and preceptor of otherwise wayward, weak, self-indulgent, or stubbornly transgressive creatures;
- instrumentalism: the view that every individual right is only provisional and probationary, and may be abridged when not put to virtuous or commendable or socially productive uses;
- therapeutic welfarism: the view that the state must go beyond relieving misery to nurturing, healing, and cultivating the masses;
- and cultural illiberalism: the view shared by conservatives, radicals, and a few others that the state should somehow make up for the lack of community in modern life, and the alleged presence of pathological alienation and anomie.

Common to all these ideas is what Foucault refers to as the problem of the modern plebs, the solution to which is the creation of order by the training and enlistment of energies that threaten gross disorder. Indeed, the overwhelming passion in these ideas is a passion for order, for stillness, for regularity, for predictability, for a coherence that can exist only as the result of a drastic purification of human inclinations and actions, and a continued exercise of fundamentally undemocratic authority in every area of society.

One might think that there was a latent death wish in this passion, something akin to the death wish present in utopian thought. But apart from this *direct* if dreamlike connection between the sources of state-activism and the will to deathlike stillness, I would suggest that the various encroachments of state-activism help to do the awful work of subtly, indirectly, but inexorably emboldening officials to think with an ever deepening seriousness the nuclear thoughts they express publicly, and of conditioning people to depend, comply, go along, trust, even to the extent of accepting policies that threaten massive ruin and the possibility of human and natural extinction.

It is hopeless suddenly to reverse these tendencies of state-activism in the United States or other nuclear democracies. There may be something quixotic in even thinking to challenge them. But if there is any resource at all—in regard to the United States—it lies in the renewal of that component of individualism that prizes noninterference in the life of the individual for the sake of his or her exploratory self-making, for the sake of what I call democratic individuality. Even short of the full expression of that ideal, the challenge could be in the name of what Mill calls (in the first chapter of *On Liberty*) individual sovereignty. We would call it a modest free being. If individuals do nothing truly and gloriously individualist; if indeed some of them behave foolishly or disreputably, government must nevertheless not treat them as if they were only machines made to function smoothly. It must treat them without such contempt, if it is not to dwarf them. Mill's theory of individual sovereignty is all the more relevant in the nuclear age: the dwarfing inherent in state-activism serves nuclear statism.

At least, one could hope that state-activism would be discussed more, and that obstacles to its almost noiseless spread would be interposed more often. The threat is all the greater because the injury to individuals inflicted by state-activism can remain unfelt. Injury to the dignity of free being can be subtle, hard to talk about. It would be well to insist on talking about it.

Yet, looked at globally, the problems of overpopulation, ecological damage, and poverty seem so immense that, as I have admitted, state activism appears attractive. In fact, state activism carried out by disciplinary dictatorships can appear doubly attractive, as it does to even so magnanimous a soul as Hans Jonas in his important recent book, *The Imperative of Responsibility*. The further horror is that there might be fantasies in which the gravest problem becomes the Swiftian solution to other grave problems, in which nuclear war becomes the solution to many of the problems of overpopulation. Thus the possibility of extinction would become most real when the urgencies of economic survival had become most imperious, and the individual most pitilessly dwarfed. □

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Abraham Brumberg

Nicaragua: A Mixture of Shades

A First-Hand Report on Sandinista Politics

Anyone who returns to Nicaragua after a two-year absence—as I recently did—must be struck by a marked deterioration in every facet of life in that country. Two years ago, despite the increasing cost of fighting a war on both borders, there was ample evidence of improvement in the life of the average citizen. While the rest of Latin America was experiencing a negative rate of economic growth, Nicaragua's continued to increase steadily. Much of the country's GNP was being eaten up by the war effort; yet enough was left for various agricultural and industrial projects, for education, for health programs, and for a generally higher standard of living.

The government, to be sure, had committed economic blunders and inanities, such as its initial attempt to convert into collective farms all the land seized from the Somoza oligarchy and its cronies. It had relied excessively on food subsidies; it had failed to establish a coherent wage and price policy or a sensible system of graduated incentives to production. The Sandinistas' ideological proclivities had antagonized a good part of the country's middle class, and potentially productive sectors of it had consequently emigrated. Nevertheless, not even the most severe critics of the Sandinista regime could—or did—deny that the average Nicaraguan was living better, and could expect to live considerably longer, than ever before.

Politically, too, things seemed to be looking up two years ago. Censorship, introduced as part of the State of Emergency in March 1982 after several nasty *contra* attacks well inside the country, was still heavy—and heavy-handed. Political parties smarted under restrictions that made it impossible for them to pursue their activities on even remotely equal terms with the ruling FSLN (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional). Conflict with the Catholic Church, patently a foe of the regime, still raged. Nevertheless, change was in the air. A party that prided itself, not without reason, on maintaining the support of the bulk of the population, and that simultaneously understood its survival to depend on the active sympathy (read: economic and military aid) of Latin America and Western Europe, the FSLN was visibly eager to relax some of its controls and reach an accommodation with its critics.

At that time—two years ago—elections were still nine months off. Preparations, however, were already under way. Discussions with various political parties, even those that discreetly (or not so discreetly) cheered for the *contras*, were proceeding. There was a dialogue with the Church. Most important, the Sandinistas had abandoned the disastrous attempt to "integrate" into the "Revolutionary Project" the indigenous population of the Atlantic Coast (Miskitos and two other Indian tribes, as well as Caribbean blacks, all traditionally hostile to the "Spaniards" of the West). After several massacres and the emergence of a Miskito resistance movement, the Sandinistas recognized their egregious errors and, with apologies, tried to substitute a political and economic compromise.

Current Conditions

Two years later, the landscape looks bleak. More than 50 percent of the GNP now goes to defense, as a result of which numerous social

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programs have been either curtailed or discontinued. Basic consumer goods are rationed and are in woefully short supply; inflation is at an all-time high; exports, predictably, are at an all-time low. (The official rate of exchange in 1984 was 150 cordobas to the dollar. Now it is 750.) Impoverishment is visible everywhere. In my obscenely posh hotel (posh by any standard, obscenely so when measured against the average monthly wage of about 25,000 cordobas), the water was turned off twice a week, as it is all over Managua. The population of the capital has climbed to unmanageable proportions, largely as a result of migrations from the war zones in the north. About a third of the population, over 900,000 people, live in Managua, yet there is no sign of construction, let alone reconstruction. Black market activities thrive openly. And there can be no doubt that popular discontent is growing.

The political horizon has also darkened. The six opposition parties that ran in the election of November 1984 (see my article in *Dissent*, Spring 1985) and that have since participated in the deliberations of the National Assembly, openly grumble that they are ignored and bypassed. They complain that legislation is either railroaded through the Assembly by the FSLN, or merely announced—with hardly a word of consultation—by presidential decree (for which, read: by decision of the nine-man National Directorate of the FSLN). Outside the National Assembly, among opposition parties, hostility toward the regime is more rampant than ever before. The Vatican's appointment, early last year, of Archbishop Obando y Bravo as Cardinal is seen by the government as a political provocation, and not without reason; this new Cardinal's militant anti-government sallies, expressed within and beyond the borders of Nicaragua, have brought efforts at improving church-state relations (always sporadic) to a virtual standstill.

NOTHING HAS CONTRIBUTED more to the high level of tension than the new provisions of the State of Emergency, enacted last October. These provisions may be more fearsome on paper than in practice: freedom of movement, for instance, is suspended, yet there is no sign as far as I could learn that the suspension is being enforced. I spent a full day, together with three other Americans, driving through the northern reaches of the country where *contras* are still operating. Not once were we stopped and asked to produce documents; not once did local *campesinos* refuse to talk to us. Nevertheless, the government has now armed itself with legal justification to detain for an indefinite period anyone suspected of committing "crimes against the security of national and public order"—and there were indeed many such cases in the first weeks after the decree was passed. The government has banned strikes. It has further restricted the activity of political parties, which must now ask for special permission to hold outdoor rallies. Such measures elicit, both at home and abroad, new apprehensions about Sandinista intentions.

What has caused this dismaying reversal? Is it, as some would assert, inevitable, insofar as economic decline and political bloody-mindedness are the essential earmarks of a communist regime, and all communist regimes are hell-bent on monopolizing power and crushing any obstacles? (I exclude what used to be called lunatic fringe conservatism, which out of ignorance or hypocrisy pronounces the *contras* heirs to Washington and Jefferson.) Or is it, as others would affirm with equal certainty, that the war, openly espoused, financed, and controlled by the United States, has forced the Sandinistas to take repressive measures? Those who condemn American policies do not necessarily excuse the FSLN (here I exclude the groupies, American and West European, who litter the Nicaraguan scene and to whom any criticism of the regime is sacrilege: a delegation of venerable survivors of the Lincoln Brigade; inferior American poets, given to howling their verses to indifferent Sandinista soldiers and gaping tourists; idealistic young "internationalists" helping out with the cotton and coffee harvests; zealots like the Jesuit poet and Minister of Culture, Ernesto Cardenal). Even members of the FSLN do not always excuse themselves. Generally, the Sandinista officials I talked to were far more ready to concede their mistakes and failures than were their foreign admirers. But they tend to explain even highly disturbing actions as responses dictated by American aggression.

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Well into the first week of my recent visit, I met a Western diplomat (whose name I cannot disclose). He listened to me good-naturedly as I complained about my difficulties in establishing the truth about anything, everything, the simplest fact. (Nearly everybody one meets in Nicaragua is genial and articulate, and each one offers his version of a fact; every version is wildly and improbably at odds with every other version.) The Western diplomat's response: "Yes, it's quite a problem. You can write two articles about Nicaragua, each of them based on the same facts and each arriving at diametrically opposite conclusions. And both," he added with a smile, "would be equally true."

Expansion of the Military

THIS SHREWD REMARK CONTINUED TO RESONATE during my stay. The growth of the armed forces is a case in point. The bare facts are (I think) indisputable: since the introduction of "Patriotic Military Service" in 1983, the total number of troops in both the regular army and the "citizens' militia" has risen to 120,000. The budget for defense has risen commensurately; some estimates, which include indirect costs of the war effort, go as high as nearly 60 percent of the GNP. It can be argued that the military buildup began before the *contras* constituted a real threat, that the buildup was rooted in the determination to create a cadre of loyal followers with an ideological and material stake in the system. As one Western diplomat put it, the army can be seen as the "Praetorian Guard of the revolution." A good deal of evidence supports this contention. The armed forces are privileged: they have access to special stores and to hospitals equipped with facilities and medicines unavailable to the average Nicaraguan. Recruits and volunteers alike undergo an ideological and political training that even diehard enemies of the Sandinistas agree is highly successful. (A taxi driver in Managua: "I hate the Sandinistas, but I can't talk about it to my sons and nephews who served two years in the army—they're crazy about the FSLN.")

One could, then—following the diplomat's words—write a convincing article about the Sandinista version of a "new class," *nomenklatura* Nicaragua-style. Relevant examples from other areas of Nicaraguan life could be found to illustrate the thesis that the Sandinista Revolution, impelled by an inner dynamic, is traveling in an authoritarian direction. The original impulse to social justice and equality is dwindling; a bureaucracy is reproducing itself according to the models of bureaucratic machines in communist countries (charted by, among others, Trotsky, Christian Rakovsky, and Maria Hirszowicz); as Marx himself said in the *Eighteenth Brumaire*, the machine is being "perfected . . . instead of [smashed]."

Yet such an article would fail to account for the fact that any country confronted by a military threat will maximize its military strength and turn for appropriate aid wherever it can. This is all the more true when local insurgents are backed by a superpower bent on overthrowing the regime. It is not in the interests of the Sandinistas to allocate so much of their budget for defense: they are fully aware that their popular support rests in large part on their success in redressing social and economic inequalities and fulfilling some of their promises. But short of negotiating with the *contras*—which for political reasons they will not do—they have no choice. They are being given no choice, furthermore, by Washington's obdurate refusal to enter into any negotiations with Managua either bilaterally or through the Contadora process.

The granting of special privileges to the army can also be seen as a quid pro quo for ensuring its loyalty. At least some of the *comandantes* are, in the view of many Western observers in Managua, well aware of the danger of excessive bureaucratization and are trying to curb its growth. By itself this guarantees nothing—but it does hold out the hope that under more normal conditions they might succeed in checking an unhealthy trend.

The tendency to rely on the armed forces as a power base is borrowed less from Soviet-style political models than from a tradition firmly rooted in Latin American history and political culture. Somoza was hardly the only Latin American ruler to use the army to safeguard his power. By now it is proverbial that any party or leader that comes to power in Latin

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America must either seize control of the army or be substantially dependent upon it. Indeed, it is precisely the lack of any independent control over the armed forces that makes Duarte's rule in El Salvador and the newly-elected Vinicio Cerezo's in Guatemala so tenuous.

To take cognizance of the force and weight of Latin American traditions is neither to deny their pernicious implications nor to suggest that the Sandinistas are blindly following in the footsteps of their enemies. It is, however, to point out that the Sandinistas understand fully what happens when a government is not in control of its army. And it is this understanding that virtually precludes any possibility of a "depoliticized" Nicaraguan army in the foreseeable future.

Small Changes

WHAT THE SANDINISTAS MAY AGREE TO are some cosmetic changes. The emphasis of their TV "commercials"about the draft has already shifted from defending the Revolution to defending *la patria.* But the FSLN is dead set against any meaningful concessions in this realm: even the name of the army—*Ejército Popular Sandinista*—is not negotiable, for symbols can be no less important than realities, indeed, are realities. Demands that the FSLN relinquish its exclusive role in the political education of the army and open it up to representatives of other political parties are shrugged off: "How can you possibly expect us," said Roger Sanchez, a young Sandinista *militante* who is a well-known cartoonist for the FSLN's newspaper, *La Barricada*, "to allow parties that are tied, openly or not, to the enemies of our country to conduct their political work [in the army] and possibly even recruit our men for their purposes?" This typical comment reveals the current polarization in Nicaragua, blurring the line between legitimate dissent and outright "counterrevolution." There is no evidence, for instance, that parties in the National Assembly that clamor for a separation of state and army have any "ties" with the *contras.* They are in fact unanimous in condemning the *contra* military aggression as both morally reprehensible and politically counterproductive. But suspicion and hostility are close to the surface—on both sides.

The example of the armed forces illustrates, I think, why a single "model" or explanation—however plausible, seductive or even, to cite my diplomat informant, "true"—is inadequate for understanding Nicaragua today. There are many forces at work in the country, and to focus on any single one of them is to lose sight of the complexity of the situation. The Sandinista system is far from hardened. It is still subject to contradictory impulses and influences, both from within and without. It is still capable of moving—broadly speaking—either toward greater authoritarianism and centralization, or toward a more pluralistic and consensual system.

Right now, in Nicaragua and among some writers in the United States, the Latin American "model" seems fashionable. The Sandinistas, you will hear it said, are really reproducing, in their own way, the very system they replaced. Somoza came to power through bullets; so did they. Somoza insisted on total control; they insist on "hegemony." Somoza never looked for competitors, only for cooperators; so too the Sandinistas. Somoza had a system of mock pluralism; the Sandinista version is equally phony. Under Somoza elections were rigged to give the opposition (Conservatives) about 40 percent of the vote; in the November 1984 elections the opposition was "allowed" to get some 40 percent (less, in fact). Some of the more bitter opponents of the regime maintain that the Sandinista reign is as repressive as—if not more repressive than—Somoza's (a claim regularly advanced by the Reagan administration, too).

AS WITH ALL HYPERBOLE, there is a germ of truth to this—but not much more. With one exception, leaders of all the political parties—including Domingo Sanchez, head of the "Marxist-Leninist" Socialist Party* and a vo-

* The Socialist party is actually the traditional pro-Moscow Communist party, founded in 1944. The PC de N split off in 1967 in protest against the Socialists' "reformist" line and is wildly pro-Moscow. There are three other left-wing groups in Nicaragua, one of which—the Maoist party (MAP)—is represented in the National Assembly. The Fourth International is represented by a tiny *Liga Marxista Revolucionaria.*

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ciferous critic of the FSLN—concede, begrudgingly and despite their suspicions of the Sandinistas, that the elections were "fair and accurate." The one exception is the Nicaraguan Communist Party (PC de N), whose leader angrily told me that the count was "falsified," and that in one voting district where his party has "140 members" the tally showed only "40 votes for our party." (Dr. Mariano Fiallos, chairman of the Supreme Electoral Council and by all lights an honest and honorable man, commented, "Have you looked at the Communist party organ, *Avance*? Read it. These people live in a world of fantasy. The idea that they would have as many as 140 members in one voting district is simply comical." Having leafed through some issues of *Avance* and the eighty-page program of the party, I can only agree.) The PC de N is utterly out of touch with reality.

The elections were not rigged. There was no need to rig them, if only because there is no doubt whatever that the FSLN still had the backing of the majority of the country. The opposition was and is fragmented into small, squabble-ridden parties. The Latin tradition of *personalismo*—political alliances formed around a single leader—is considerably stronger among the various opposition parties than within the FSLN, which has been able to conceal its internal wranglings (of which, knowledgeable observers say, there is no dearth) behind an impressive facade of unanimity.*

Tolerating Some Diversity

"POLITICAL PLURALISM," THEN, is not exactly or entirely a sham. But neither can it be understood in the Western parliamentary sense—and those who try to compare Nicaraguan reality with their own desired model, whether of social or liberal democracy, are bound to be disappointed. A distinguished Western diplomat was scathing on the disenchanted who, when they find that the *comandantes* are not "closet social democrats," turn to Reagan's inflated imagery of "totalitarians" and "communist tyrants." "They are," he said, "as dishonest as, in fact more dishonest than Reagan." Opposition parties do not resemble their sycophantic "counterparts" in Eastern European "people's democracies," which cheerfully accept the leading role of the Communist party and almost invariably vote the party line. In Nicaragua, political parties loudly disagree. They oppose, and frequently vote against, legislation introduced by the FSLN (whose members, whatever their private misgivings, always vote en bloc). But their power is limited, both *de facto* and *de jure*, and their freedom of maneuver circumscribed. The Sandinistas make no bones about it. Let me again quote from my interview with Roger Sanchez:

> **AB** (re Sanchez's claim that the opposition parties are "tied to our enemies"): Yes, I know that some of the opposition parties here are in one way or another sympathetic to the *contras*. But surely this does not apply to the parties in the National Assembly, such as the Popular Liberal party, the Democratic Conservatives, or the Popular Social Christian party.
>
> **RS:** Well, I am not entirely sure that they are altogether free of those ties. What is important is that the FSLN led the Revolution, and is the only party that presented a truly national program to the people of Nicaragua. We should be fools to hand

* In his article "The Nicaraguan Tangle" (*New York Review of Books*, Dec. 5, 1985), Robert S. Leiken reports that "two leaders of the registered opposition (the PLI and the PSN) told [him] that the opposition parties had participated in a preelection agreement with the FSLN to allocate the votes." I asked many people about this, including leaders of the two parties Leiken cites, and none had ever heard about such an "agreement." In general, it is a wise rule in Nicaragua not to take the word of any partisan, pro- or anti-Sandinista at face value.

On the need to cross-check suspicious stories, I offer the following examples: According to Minister of the Interior Tomas Borge, Cardinal Obando has "expelled over 150 priests and nuns" from Nicaragua, for presumed insubordination and for championing the cause of the "popular church." When I checked Borge's claim with the head of the Jesuit University of Nicaragua (himself pro-Sandinista, as is the entire Jesuit order in Nicaragua), he answered with a smile: "That's an exaggeration." (Some stray sense of propriety prevented me from asking about its magnitude.) I then checked another matter with him. Obando has announced his intention to expel the "red" Franciscan priest, Father Molino, whose Sunday masses resemble ardent political rallies more than religious ceremonies. Obando's spokesman, Rev. Bismarck Carvallo, denies that over 100 priests have signed a petition protesting Obando's action. The head of the Jesuit University: "I myself obtained 20 signatures from my fellow Jesuits."

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over power to political parties that began to develop a political program only after the Revolution.... This is a country that only now is embarking on a program of social transformation, and the bourgeoisie is certainly unable to undertake this task....

AB: Well, then: the attitude of the FSLN is, "We have the power, we conceived the Historic Revolutionary Project, therefore other parties are suspect. Maybe some are allied with the counterrevolution, maybe some are not—but we are suspicious of all of them, and so we arrogate to ourselves the authority to make all the ultimate decisions." But then, what happens to your principle of "political pluralism"?

RS: What we say is that the Revolutionary Project is not under discussion. This does not mean there is no freedom of expression—and I assure you I don't mean this rhetorically. There is a space for pluralism within the Revolution. If we seem to assume such an arrogant attitude about it, it is simply because we have to defend our Revolution. There are parties here that can make a contribution to the Revolution, but then there are those out to destroy us. We do not turn a deaf ear to what other parties are saying—we certainly must have their opinions in order to reach just and correct conclusions. We have been in the struggle for more than twenty years; many of our leaders have laid down their lives in the struggle, and now there are parties that didn't take part in it and want to dispute with us over power. That's really unthinkable.

Words lend themselves to different interpretations, and in the still fluid conditions of today's Nicaragua their practical application may undergo significant changes. Yet I think that *compañero* Sanchez's candid formulations reflect the basic assumptions of the Sandinista leadership: namely, that the FSLN is History's chosen instrument of social change in Nicaragua, and that the party has no intention of relinquishing this role. To understand this is to understand why, right now at least, it is absurd to expect the Sandinistas to accede to "outside" opposition parties' demands for genuine power-sharing. Even some of the demands voiced by the "loyal opposition" (parties that remain within the National Assembly), such as separation of party and state, and the establishment of the checks-and-balances system of a parliamentary model, are scarcely likely to be met. Let me quote quite an authoritative source, Tomas Borge, minister of the interior, member of the nine-man National Directorate and the only living founder of the FSLN. Our exchange took place during a two-and-one-half hour meeting of Borge and several members of Americas Watch (AW). One member of the AW delegation asked Borge for permission to visit a detention prison for those suspected of "counterrevolutionary crimes." (All other prisons, housing either suspects—both criminal and political—or individuals already convicted, are open to organizations such as AW and the Red Cross.)

TB: I will certainly look into your request. But I cannot make such an important decision myself—only the National Directorate can do it.

AB: Excuse me, *comandante*, but may I ask you why the National Directorate is to make this decision, and not an appropriate government agency?

TB: Because we must reach decisions collegially. If only one person makes important decisions, this can lead to personal dictatorship and totalitarianism—and we don't want that in this country. That is why we have a collegial mechanism.

AB: I understand why it is infinitely better to have a collective leadership rather than a personal dictator. But my question is, why are decisions like that vested in the party rather than the state?

TB: Because this is the reality of this country. Leaders of the Revolution are also leaders of the state. The president, the ministers, the head of the army, and other state officials are all leading members of the party.

If nothing else, Borge deserves applause for his candor—which also points to some of the serious problems in present-day Nicaragua. In the sequel to this article, which will appear in the next issue of *Dissent*, I will deal with some specific examples of centralizing tendencies in Nicaraguan politics and society; whether these are in practice moderated by equally significant countervailing forces; and how such cross-currents of interest and opinion make Nicaragua so interesting and unpredictable a place.□

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Leon Fink

Bread & Roses, Crusts & Thorns

The Troubled Story of 1199

From the beginning, the New York Hospital Workers—Local 1199 of the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union (RWDSU)—projected an exceptional image among American labor unions. Its first strike for recognition in May 1959 came at a time when many longtime admirers of the CIO were noticing signs of decline in American unionism as a social movement. Union membership in blue-collar industry had, as Daniel Bell wrote in 1958, substantially reached its upper limit, while the explosive service, sales, and white-collar sectors were proving all but impenetrable to organizing efforts. The bottom rung of the economic ladder, that "other America" holding vast numbers of unemployed and unskilled workers, experienced little contact with organized labor. And within unionized basic industry, industrial relations had largely become a tame, routinized affair.

Codification of labor relations, beginning with the Wagner Act and extended in restricted fashion by the Taft-Hartley (1947) and Landrum-Griffin Acts (1959), further centralized authority and responsibility away from the shop floor. Tracing a bureaucratization process that had transformed unions from hungry fighting units to stable holding operations, C. Wright Mills spoke of the "new men of power" in union leadership who had their counterpart in the "organization men" of the business world. "If one were to single out the most telling personality weakness of the unions," labor economist Neil Chamberlain observed in 1960, "it would be their passion for respectability. The goal most ardently sought by union leaders generally . . . is to be accepted by their communities as good middle-class citizens."

The hospital drive of 1199 looked different. Here was a tiny old CIO local of drugstore workers challenging one of the staunchest non-union sanctums of postwar America, the giant voluntary hospitals. Governed by blue-chip boards of directors, the nation's largest hospital system in New York City was a big business still practicing the personnel principles of a charitable relief agency. The service staff of nurses' aides, orderlies, dietary and laundry workers, and maintenance employees lived in a world apart from physicians and even from the underpaid nurses who often supervised them.

Exempt by hospital-lobby pressure from the minimum wage, Social Security, and labor legislation of the 1930s, voluntary hospital workers as "involuntary philanthropists" began at $30-a-week pay. Receiving less than minimum wage, many (perhaps a third) were eligible for welfare benefits even while working full-time. Split shifts, deductions for meals, and demeaning separate dining rooms were common. Without group rights or formal standards of job equity, informal deals of all kinds were cut between the reigning departmental supervisors and their "charges." It was not unheard of, for example, for maintenance workers to pave the driveway of a boss on hospital time.

When, in 1936 and 1937, New York City hospital workers made moves toward organizing (including a rash of sit-down strikes), their efforts were quickly put down and their claims denounced by those who otherwise accepted the need to deal with organized labor. With the exception of Maimonides Hospital in Brooklyn, indirect employee representation plans in Minnesota and Toledo, and a few scattered cases of

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collective bargaining, unionization in the nation's hospitals remained negligible until the early 1960s.

Three structural changes within the hospital industry helped to enable unionization in the postwar period. First, a steady expansion of acute-care facilities disrupted the personalistic authority of administrators and department heads over the smaller and slower-moving chronic-care institutions. In the two decades before 1970, paced by the voluntary hospitals, some 2.5 million employees were added to the nation's health-care work force, while costs skyrocketed by 1,500 percent. Second, and at the same time, third-party (that is, insurance-payment) and public financing (Hill-Burton in 1946, state subsidies, Medicare–Medicaid in 1967–68) displaced fee for service and charitable contributions as the anchor of hospital budgeting. In the heyday of domestic social spending, hospital administrators could relax their bottom line without disastrous consequences. Third and finally, there occurred a dramatic demographic switch in northern big cities as older European "new-immigrant" workers were replaced by Southern blacks and by Hispanic and Caribbean migrants. By the mid-'60s, nonwhites made up three-quarters of service and maintenance workers at New York City hospitals.

These changes accentuated the contrast between the separate castes within the hospital work force. Thus, in one of the most economically dynamic and technologically sophisticated American institutions, there remained a mass of unskilled menial laborers—largely black and overwhelmingly female—upon which the system depended.

The 1959 strike led by Local 1199 in New York City raised the demand for recognition by that "other America" for whom the postwar boom had been more myth than substance. This strike—one of the first Northern campaigns to tap a growing civil rights coalition composed of black community leaders and white liberal allies—foreshadowed much of the operating style of Local 1199 for the next two decades. City labor chieftain Harry Van Arsdale rallied contingents of the newly united AFL–CIO to adopt the strikers' cause, while A. Philip Randolph, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Eleanor Roosevelt added their support.

The fledgling hospital union, however, depended above all on its capacity to mobilize the city's "new working class" of black and Hispanic service workers. Across the city the campaign not only turned out masses of workers on picket lines at considerable sacrifice to already meager family budgets, it also summoned a group of rank-and-file activists from whom the union's future stewards and organizing staff would emerge. Two recruits in particular from this 1959 campaign would figure prominently in the union's future. For Mount Sinai orderly Henry Nicholas the 1959 strike served as the launching pad of a new career. During the organizing drive Nicholas had shied away from talk of a strike. Leaving the Navy in 1957 and not wishing to return to his native Mississippi, he dreaded the thought of losing his first foothold in the city. His friend and union steward Julio Pagan almost had to pull him into the picket line when the strike began, and Nicholas still remembers his initial embarrassment when first spotted by his supervisor. But by the second day of the strike, when he signed up as picket captain, Nicholas was with it around the clock.

Nicholas traces his reaction to survival-thinking implanted years before. "Only the strong survive," his sharecropper father had said. "My father believed that everyone had to be prepared to survive on their own, without depending on anyone." In the hospital, Henry Nicholas suppressed a smoldering resentment of his white bosses. During the strike, however, he and his antagonists were on "separate sides of the street." "I knew that my only salvation was to win and I had to do what was necessary to make sure we won." The trouble at Mount Sinai, Nicholas came to feel, was like the fight for survival facing the black farmer in Mississippi. The threat of being run off your land or fired by your hospital seemed to him part of the same "administration of things." Afterward, Nicholas worked as a union organizer; served alongside Elliott Godoff, the national organizing director; was elected to lead the union's Philadelphia district; and in 1981 assumed the presidency of the national union.

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Doris Turner also came on staff after the 1959 strike, identified as an articulate, natural leader by chief organizer Elliott Godoff and the union's president Leon Davis. Turner, who was the great-great-granddaughter of a slave midwife and the daughter of a skilled shoemaker, never lacked initiative. Taking a job in 1956 at Lenox Hill Hospital to buy material for her needlework, she quickly found herself "involved with the people who worked there." Well before the union appeared at the hospital, she had fought and won a grievance over racial discrepancy in pay, and another over a free-meal subsidy (previously granted only to male kitchen workers).

Identified as a union firebrand during the strike, Turner was fired shortly thereafter. When she won her job back through arbitration, "The men in the kitchen spread their aprons down for my new-carpet entrance." Soon Turner left the hospital permanently, this time to work on the union staff. Over the following two decades, she became a celebrated symbol of the union. As a protégée of the union's president Leon Davis, Doris Turner was elected vice-president of the district in 1964, and by the early 1970s she appeared to be heir apparent to Davis.

Although the 1959 strike did not result in an immediate recognition agreement,* it broke new ground for hospital workers around the country. Not only had a nonprofit institution been breached by the union, but unskilled black and Hispanic workers were now claiming rights and a level of welfare that public authorities would have to accommodate. In this crucial sense, then, the hospital workers' crusade joined the methods of industrial unionism with the fervor of a poor peoples' movement resting on a civil-rights awakening.

It was no accident that Local 1199 played a leading role. A combination of hard-headed, indefatigable organizing and the determination to cross racial barriers was a direct legacy of left-wing CIO unionism washed out of labor's mainstream by the purges of the late 1940s. The Retail Drug Employees' Local 1199 was one of a cluster of predominantly Jewish and Communist-led unions, which during the 1930s had organized a sector of New York City's retail trade, then hung on for dear life.

The person most responsible for the union's 25-year independent survival was Leon Davis, president of 1199 since 1934. Davis was born November 21, 1906 in Pinsk, White Russia, and came to the United States in 1921 to live with an aunt in Hartford, Connecticut. While finishing high school, young Davis waited on tables, worked on a tobacco farm, and soon began to immerse himself in politics. A local strike of upholsterers was his baptism in labor unionism. A bit later he turned to full-time political work for the CP–USA. Along with sympathizers from the Trade Union Unity League, the Communist-led federation, he set out to organize "all workers in the pharmaceutical industry."

On March 31, 1929, "Vol. I, No. 1" of the *Voice of the Mortar and Pestle* proclaimed the goals of the New York Drug Clerks Association (NYDCA)—to gain union recognition, better conditions, and generally "develop a militant spirit of struggle against wage cutting, speed-ups, unsanitary conditions, etc." The NYDCA met twice a month at Stuyvesant Casino, 142 Second Avenue, and its publication carried an endorsement from the Scientific Vegetarian Restaurant on Madison Avenue, a place to "meet for a good meal after the Dance."

In 1931 the sectarian NYDCA merged with another organizing venture, the Pharmacists' Union of Greater New York, to form Local 1199. Phil Kamenkowitz, a pharmacist and staunch Republican who later became vice-president of the drug union, remembered the union headquarters as a "sloppy cubbyhole" with a desk, a wooden bench along the wall, and "four guys playing chess."

Determined to unify a drugstore work force on "industrial" lines, the largely Jewish pharmacists and clerks tried to add black porters and stockmen to their organization. In 1937 the union began a successful campaign in Harlem, including open-air meetings of the unem-

* The 1959 strike ended with the establishment of a so-called Permanent Advisory Committee or third-party grievance mediation panel, an arrangement that turned into out-and-out union recognition within three years.

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ployed, to secure jobs for black pharmacists and promote the "invisible" porters to sodamen positions. Such agitation, in line with the generally aggressive stance of the American Communist movement on Jim Crow, had its counterpart in the internal life of the union with annual celebrations of Negro History Week and constant reiterations by Davis that "in 1199 we mix and live as one."

Later, in 1948 and 1949, when the union came under political attack both from rival CIO unions and from the government (in 1948 Davis took the Fifth before the Hartley Committee, including an inquisitively hostile young Senator John F. Kennedy), black Harlem pharmacists gratefully came to the rescue. On one occasion the Harlem pharmacists hid Davis in the 135th Street YMCA to protect him from process-servers. On another the North Harlem Pharmaceutical Association closed up a hundred stores rather than see them certified by a raiding union. Attacking the "whole vicious system of white supremacy" as early as 1951, Leon Davis spoke for a "union of 5,000 men and women who have learned through bitter experience that real progress cannot be achieved unless there is progress for all the people, Negro and white, Jew and gentile."

While the ideological commitments of the drug union's leaders remained largely intact, their ties to the Communist party grew increasingly irrelevant and finally disintegrated in the 1950s. Leon Davis himself resigned from the CP at the beginning of the decade in order to sign the Taft-Hartley oath and claim rights under the national labor laws. Other party members simply gave up political work (Moe Foner in 1956, Jesse Olson in 1958) before joining the union staff. Davis insisted on independence from all outside political directives. As early as 1948, for example, he ignored a party-backed resolution that Theodore Mitchell, a black porter, become union secretary-treasurer, giving the position instead to former sodaman William J. Taylor, who would guide the union's benefit and pension programs for decades to come. Davis also refused to adopt a unilateral position on the Rosenberg case. Fearing union division, he characteristically deferred the matter to a stewards' assembly and only then joined the demonstrators.

Throughout the 1950s a contingent of the party, led by pharmacist Jesse Olson, operated as a caucus within the union, with at most 40 members clustered in the activist steward positions. By the time Olson himself quit, the party and its influence had faded. Elliott Godoff's son remembers his father scoffing that the party people were "losers." Olson himself had come to believe that the party "was not an organization that would advance the cause." "It was too alien, too undemocratic."

What remained were habits of mind, a disciplined behavior, and a network of associations based on "the old days." Party circles, for example, would continue to be an important source of organizers. When Davis needed a hospital organizing staff, he typically turned first to Olson, a man he had previously put off —"He said my head was always in the clouds," recalls Olson. For when it came to making sacrifices, old comrades came cheap. Going from a $175-a-week salary as a registered pharmacist to $110 in an organizer's position, Olson acquiesced. This, he felt, was "God's work." No "ordinary worker," asserts Olson, "would have done that."

Occasionally, 1199 leaders made symbolic journeys and gestures to their past. The union conducted a successful direct-mail campaign for contributions to the Angela Davis legal defense in 1971. And Leon Davis visited the Soviet Union three times and once entertained a Soviet trade delegation at union headquarters. Leon Davis and Elliott Godoff, both immigrants from Russia, friends note, carried a "touch of Russian nationalism."

Despite such enduring sentiments, however, for the pragmatic union leaders the party remained irrelevant at best, and more often an embarrassment of uncertain proportions. At times, for example, Moe Foner had the unpleasant duty of rousting retired members and die-hard comrades from the building to prevent them from making their accustomed rounds with the *Daily Worker*.

It was the association with the civil rights movement that gave the fledgling hospital workers union the crucial boost. From the late 1950s through the 1960s the union regularly

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picked up endorsements of black leaders, from Adam Clayton Powell to Martin Luther King. Hospital picket lines were joined by church groups and civil rights organizations, and by other unions wishing to identify with civil rights. Identification of the union with minorities helped influence liberal white opinion among newspaper editors, political officials, and even hospital trustees.

Civil rights activism not only linked the old left leaders of 1199 with the minority work force in the Eastern metropolitan areas, it also seemed magically to transcend older political and ideological divisions among whites. Within the New York City Central Labor Council, both AFL craft-union leader Harry Van Arsdale and right-wing socialist and CIO leader Moe Iushewitz gave support to the 1959 hospital drive. The Irish-Catholic Van Arsdale, likely sensing an opportunity to aid black workers without disturbing white jobs, avoided a public-relations problem by publicly accepting a simple declaration from Leon Davis that he was "not a Communist." In that same campaign, Moe Foner remembers being called at night by Arnold Beichman, aide to Van Arsdale and an alleged labor-CIA operative. Beichman, as it turned out, simply wanted instructions on how to join the hospital picket lines.

In 1959 James Wechsler, the *New York Post* columnist who had "named names" before HUAC, began his sympathetic reporting for the cause of the hospital workers. Later, in a bitter 1965 campaign, when the union took on the antiunion and racially closed community of Bronxville, New York, one of two prominent local families siding with the strikers was that of John Richardson, Jr. Richardson, a past president of Radio Free Europe and future assistant-secretary of state under Nixon, had seen FBI files on the Communist backgrounds of 1199's leaders. A passionate advocate of civil rights, Richardson felt the issues were more important than political histories.

From the Greensboro lunch-counter sit-ins in 1960 through the death of Martin Luther King in 1968, the drug and hospital workers union was a constant fixture in the civil rights campaigns. More than a thousand 1199ers gathered at the famous Washington civil rights demonstration in 1963. They joined the Freedom Marches in the mid-'60s and, only months before Martin Luther King's assassination, gained his praise as "the authentic conscience of the labor movement."

The first "national" effort of 1199 in Charleston, South Carolina in 1969, highlighted the self-conscious merger of "union power" and "soul power." There, under the joint direction of 1199 and the SCLC (then led by the Rev. Ralph Abernathy and by Andrew Young), hospital workers challenged the state university hospital to recognize its all-black service work force. After nearly 1,000 arrests, this militant campaign was resolved by intervention from the federal government. While no secure union foothold emerged in Charleston, the union had sent the clearest possible message around the country. The "civil rights union" would do whatever was necessary to bring justice and new hope to black workers.

Distinguishing itself as "a union with soul," 1199 proved a dynamic social force from 1959 through the mid-1970s. While reaching a pragmatic accommodation with most New York City voluntary hospitals—that is with union and hospital officials pushing the state to find money for contract settlements—the union undertook a range of initiatives. District 1199 nearly doubled in size through the success, under Olson's direction, of a separate Guild division of professional, technical, and clerical hospital employees. This in turn became a model for a late-1970s drive among registered nurses.

Over its first 25 years in the hospitals, 1199's contracts registered a 140 percent minimal gain in real wages. An expanding list of health benefits, an 1199 credit union, training programs for job upgrading, academic scholarships, and summer-camp stipends for workers' children helped to define a new standard of living for union members. Support for rent strikes, community-controlled schools, and an early, active opposition to the Vietnam War consolidated 1199's maverick public stance—not only winning the blessing of King ("my favorite union") but even securing support from such black radicals as Malcolm X.

The lively public image of the union was strengthened by an ambitious cultural pro-

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gram, designed by Moe Foner. A tradition of award-winning publications, out-sized press coverage, and a union art gallery culminated in the unprecedented $1.5 million Bread and Roses theater-and-arts extravaganza of 1979–82. Bringing live theater through federal dollars to thousands of union members during their lunch hours in the hospitals, the Bread and Roses program offered the most polished testament to the way older Jewish radicals had sought to legitimate social unionism among a new body of urban workers.

If the rise of 1199 in New York and beyond tells us something about the historical possibilities for labor opened up by the civil rights movement, then recent, severe troubles inside the union equally reflect the disintegration of those social forces from which 1199 originally drew strength. Union tensions first erupted in 1980 over the coinciding events of a merger move and a fight over succession to the leadership held for 50 years by Leon Davis. For years Davis had staked the union's future on a campaign of national expansion. The experience of the 1970s had convinced him and his close advisers that a New York-based 1199 could not by itself sustain the effort. Economic downturn, increasing managerial sophistication, and interunion jurisdictional conflicts had blunted 1199 initiatives, beginning in Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1970. In small-town and white ethnic settings, and among skilled technicians and nurses, 1199 discovered that its militant "Black Power" image was more hindrance than help. Under these circumstances, Davis nurtured to near-completion a merger between his own international, the RWDSU, and the SEIU (the Service Employees International Union), the nation's largest health-care union, which would complement 1199's East Coast strength with deep California moorings.

This merger would mean a more powerful union; it would also mean a union less New York-focused, more skilled, and less black in membership. With 1199 leadership guaranteed the top executive position for the first eight years of a new National Hospital and Health Care Employees Union, Davis chose Henry Nicholas for his heir apparent, nominating him as president of 1199's national union, a position Davis had held together with the New York district presidency. In building up a Philadelphia district of 10,000 members, Nicholas had demonstrated talent. He also was seen as gifted in dealing with a socially diverse membership. And he worked smoothly with Davis and the union's largely white national executive staff, something that could hardly be said for his chief rival, New York Hospital Division leader Doris Turner.

In the end it was Turner who broke up Davis's succession scenario, crippling the merger effort and swiftly moving to consolidate her own power as District 1199 president in May 1982. Her chief ally in the intraunion warfare was the RWDSU's president, Alvin Heaps. President of a notoriously weak international, of which 1199 was the biggest unit, Heaps had reluctantly been dragged along in the merger process until Turner's opposition gave him a new reason for delay.

When a pipe bomb exploded in Heaps's office at Christmas time 1981, severely injuring the union leader, the issue seemed unofficially sealed. While the perpetrators of the bombing remain unknown, Heaps, perhaps fearing any move away from the status quo, indefinitely suspended talks with the SEIU. Despite overwhelming endorsement by 1199 convention delegates and the membership in a mailed referendum, the merger was dead.

Bitter triangular infighting between Heaps, Nicholas, and Turner nearly suffocated the union in the following two years. After attempts by Heaps to trustee the national union (to place it, effectively, in receivership) and to dissolve 1199 altogether were temporarily checked in the courts, the warring parties settled on a truce. In spring 1984, Local 1199 split down the middle into two unions, one half (Turner's New York district) remaining within the RWDSU, the other half (Nicholas's national union) forming an independent AFL–CIO international.

On one level the split between Davis and Doris Turner was a simple power play and a clash of individual wills. Turner had reportedly never taken to Davis's sporadic attempts to "educate her" about union and political issues, while Davis had grown increasingly impatient

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with a vice-president "who did not even read the newspaper." One of the last straws of disaffection, reportedly, was Turner's public distancing from the 1978 contract that had sacrificed her priority on the EOWO (Every Other Weekend Off) issue to other ends.

In labor circles a high price is put on public display of unity, and in this respect 1199 was perhaps more zealous than most. Still, had there been no merger movement, or had Turner been tapped over Nicholas for the top job, the differences between the two camps and the two generations within the union leadership might have been finessed. Key Davis lieutenants—such as Moe Foner, executive secretary, Jesse Olson, Guild leader, and Robert Muehlenkamp, the national organizing director—might have willingly made the best of serving a new leader. Turner's own hurt pride was no doubt an important ingredient in the crisis that would overtake the union. As her former top aide would put it, "Doris had a ghetto cunning that Davis didn't understand. She cut his throat the first chance she got."

On another level, however, the Davis-Turner division reflected deep-seated tensions within the main body of the hospital workers' union. Davis's long and unquestioned authority had united quite different social groupings under the same roof. An overwhelmingly female black service-worker base (a majority of whom had not finished high school) was now nearly matched in numbers by highly educated and ethnically diverse professional and technical members. This, however, was only one division within the union. Another was the gap between the "bread-and-butterism" (or focus on incremental, material advances) of the union as it affected the average member and the development of higher meanings, goals, and strategies by the union's intellectual and highly politicized national leaders.

The "laying on" of cultural and political values (such as class unity, interracialism, peace politics)—so the Turner revolt indicates—was rejected and even resented by segments of the union's own internal command. With civil rights forces in disarray, a conservative political tide sweeping the nation, and 1199's own organizing drives slowed down, there seemed less urgency for the union as a "movement." Particularly in New York City, where the crusading spirit of the early organizing days was now a fading memory, the traditional left-wing rhetoric of the leaders must have seemed out of touch with the bureaucratic-administrative reality of much of union life.

It was in such circumstances, at least, that the urgent demand for power by second-level black leaders in the union went up—a demand embodied in the moves of Doris Turner. With a merger move likely to put off forever their expected inheritance, Turner and company now repeated with a new bitterness the insiders' joke that "Jesse, Moe, and Dave ran the union while driving home to Queens each night." Impatient and defiant, the Guild vice-president, veteran black staff member and ex-CPer David White, bolted to Turner's side during the early intraunion fray in December 1981, charging Leon Davis with practicing "benevolent racism." "I found out," Davis himself volunteered shortly after retirement in 1982, "that the frustration that blacks had for the role of leadership is something that I underestimated. They were looking for actual control . . . that goes further than being elected to office, a kind of grasping for power to demonstrate their ability or lack of it."

Looking back on the past four years, it is clear that something more than a mere transfer of office occurred at New York City District 1199. It was more like a cruel parody of Third World liberation. First came the effort to drive out the colonialists, who included almost every veteran white official in the union—12 district vice-presidents and 12 of 14 Guild organizers, for example, were effectively forced out of office within two years of Doris Turner's accession. (By the end of her third year, Turner would claim that some 80 staff personnel had "deserted" her administration.)

The deportees were overwhelmingly white, and many were Jewish. Late in 1983 Turner's own comptroller, Roy Anderson, resigned his position and sought protection of the courts over the fall-out from having delayed checks to Turner's "Jewish political enemies" within the union. On January 13, 1983, and 25 years to the day after he had come on staff, Jesse Olson,

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cut off from all influence and even subjected to telephone threats to his life, quit the Guild division.

The very loss of such senior talents only increased the sense of siege within the district; extraordinary measures were justified to defend the revolution. Promerger organizers within the district, for instance, found their pay docked and even access blocked to union headquarters.

When an opposition "Unity and Progress" slate (led by elected area vice-presidents and organizers) emerged in early 1984 to challenge Turner's April reelection bid, Turner sought and received authority to hire and fire all organizers herself. In a delayed and disputed count, presided over by an all-Turner elections board, Slate 2 candidates (the opposition) in early May were declared to have lost so overwhelmingly as to make a run-off unnecessary. Further consolidation of the new regime followed: the president's term of office was extended, the number of elected officials sharply reduced, and the autonomy of the union's separate divisions within the election process abolished.

Turner also sought to instill a new spirit of nationalism in place of the suspect cosmopolitanism of the former leaders. While rhetorically still paying homage to the union's liberal social-political agenda, she made abrupt changes. New York's 1199, for example, was uncharacteristically inconspicuous at the city's giant "No Nukes!" rally on June 12, 1982. And while the hospital workers had practically provided an alternate campaign headquarters for Frank Barbaro's left-liberal challenge to Mayor Edward Koch in 1980, Doris Turner proposed in 1982 backing Koch for governor on pragmatic grounds over the more liberal Mario Cuomo (in the end the union made no endorsement).

Then, there was the cultural issue. In place of Leon Davis's secularist leftism, Doris Turner reached her rank and file with a new, open display of religious faith, active encouragement of Bible reading among union staff, and invocation of divine providence before contract talks. Coupled with her personnel actions and her priority on semiskilled home-care workers rather than on nurses in organizing drives, Turner's style signaled a clear commitment to a black-majority union. Interestingly, one of her few white appointments was a former New Left activist, who still openly professed a "white-skin privilege" philosophy that saddled the white working class with guilt for the plight of the world's poor and oppressed.

Finally, as if to deny internal weakness, Turner staked herself to a defiant negotiating stance with employers in July 1984 biennial contract talks. Despite signs that the state under Cuomo's direction was clamping down on reimbursement rates, Turner, rejecting a 4 percent pay-raise offer and 26-weekend-off hospital compromise, held fast to substantial money demands and commitment to full implementation of the EOWO benefit. An unprecedented six-week citywide hospital strike affecting 50,000 workers was the result. Before 20,000 cheering union members at Madison Square Garden on August 28, Turner proudly announced a strike settlement including full implementation of EOWO and 5 percent annual wage increases and, she added, "We didn't give back a thing, nothing." Despite the reportedly tattered nature of the strike mobilization itself and indications of demoralization and even mass defections at the picket lines, the new union president had, it seemed, successfully pulled her chestnuts out of the fire.

Turner's triumph, however, quickly turned bittersweet. First, the giveback issue refused to go away. Though most workers did not know it, Turner had signed no real contract but rather an agreement that left important pieces of the hospital financial puzzle unresolved. A contract would not in fact take effect until the union committed itself to making up a shortfall in hospital income occasioned by the settlement. In exchange for the 5 percent wage boost, Turner had agreed to choose from a list of "offsets" (mostly union benefit deferments) estimated at $29 million to $45 million. Refusing to pay out a penny of the new settlement until the union kicked in its contract subsidy, hospital officials insisted that their financial bottom line had remained firm from Day One. "It turned out," said the former League of Voluntary Hospitals president, Norman Metzger, who has dealt with 1199 since 1959, "that the union was a paper tiger. But paper

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tigers don't usually go into battle, they go to the brink of battle."

CAUGHT BETWEEN THE hospitals' intransigence and renewed pressures from within her union, Doris Turner delayed, appealing to the NLRB to release the workers' raises. A decision announced in early September 1985, however, upheld the hospitals' position on the dispute. As of this writing, nearly 16 months since the strike's end, workers' first-year raises and full implementation of EOWO still await a union designation of substantial givebacks.

Turner's second setback concerned the scandal of election fraud. The district's executive vice-president, David White, had silently resigned at the end of the '84 strike, a consequence of his growing disaffection from the Turner leadership. Then, late in the year, he approached Department of Labor (DOL) investigators with a bombshell. Turner, White claimed, had personally engineered and managed a massive vote fraud in the internal union elections of April 1984, which had deprived the promerger Unity and Progress slate of the right to a run-off with the incumbent administration. Turner called White a liar, a paid stooge, and a Communist. Amid public charges and countercharges (after White, another witness came forward to confirm his story), the DOL sought control of the disputed ballots. When, after court injunction, the federal officials acquired and inspected the tally, they found cause to call for a new election (the only redress for fraud under the Landrum-Griffin Act). A new ballot, to be administered under DOL supervision, is slated for March 1986.

The district election will offer the first real test of worker reaction to the changes that have affected their union in the past four years. Turner will likely stand on a platform of continuity and loyalty, portraying her enemies as a mixture of bosses, racists, and reds out to destroy the union. Implicitly, she will count on the visceral identification of black workers with the only black woman union president in the country. The Save Our Union (which joins Unity and Progress with independent dissidents) coalition nominated Georgiana Johnson, a black social-work assistant, at a November 1985 convention to oppose Turner. Raised in Ware Shoals, South Carolina, by her grandmother who took in laundry for a living, Johnson quit school after one year of college to get married and come to New York. In 1967 she became a Medicare case aide, then took advantage of the union's training and upgrading program and soon became a union stalwart, serving as a delegate on many committees but liking best of all the cultural extravaganza, Bread and Roses. Convinced that Turner has been "unfair to the members" even as she judges the old leadership as too long closed to new blood, Johnson presents herself as a low-keyed but determined alternative: "I'm not a person who kicks over the table and I'm not a revival-type leader." Promising immediately to restore democratic accountability while setting the status of home-care workers and the re-recruitment of some two thousand disaffected RNs as top priorities, Johnson ties the future of the district to reunification with National 1199 (now the National Union of Health Care Workers) and ultimately to nationwide organizing initiatives. "Every union that is strong in the country," says Johnson, "has organized the whole industry." "I want to follow the idea of Leon Davis and organize health care workers from top to bottom. From doctors to janitors. That's how you acquire power."

MEANWHILE, THE FRAILTY of the national union in its current geographically splintered and reduced state was demonstrated in the mixed results of a recent organizing drive among some 10,000 state mental health employees in Ohio. Risking sanctions from the AFL-CIO for raiding and throwing more than a million dollars and all of its manpower into a competition with the much larger, wealthier, and better-established American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the beleaguered 1199ers won only modest gains in three-part balloting. Adopting a style very much in keeping with the union's past, the national union's officers call for across-the-board organizing campaigns, community coalitions to defend health-care services, and for a radical reversal of AFL-CIO foreign policy on Central America. Despite their undeniable energy, however, the Nicholas-led forces seem to have collided precisely

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with the logic that led Davis to seek a nationwide merger in the first place.

A PROUD AND SOMETIMES even arrogant union, 1199 has lived through good and bad times. Now facing uncertain prospects, past ideals and visions must necessarily give way to a sober reckoning with recent lived experience. On the one hand lie immediate questions of what constitutes responsible and competent union leadership even as the health care industry enters an era of drastic organizational change. On the other hand lie the nagging issues affecting nearly all contemporary labor unions. Simply put, can 1199 stave off the rank-and-file resignation and bureaucratic demoralization that have left American trade unions virtually crippled as fighting units? For years 1199 stood as an exception constantly remobilizing itself on behalf of new organizing campaigns and infusing its internal life with a social vision that went beyond immediate bread-and-butter goals. Is there still life in such a message? In New York City, heart of 1199, union members who have passed from an age of crusading-but-paternal benevolence to a narrow-minded-but-homegrown political machine must reckon with their history and figure out if they can do better. □

To Our Contributors:

A few suggestions:

(1) Be sure to keep a copy of your ms—the mails aren't always reliable. And please remember that we can't return articles unless they're accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

(2) Please don't write to ask whether we're interested in such and such an article—it makes for useless correspondence. Look at our last few issues to see if your idea fits in. Or take a chance and send us your article.

(3) Type your ms *double-spaced*, with *wide* margins. Check all your figures, dates, names, etc.—they're the author's responsibility.

(4) Notes and footnotes should also be typed double-spaced, on a *separate* sheet. As we're not an academic journal, we prefer that they, wherever possible, be dropped altogether or worked into the text.

(5) We're usually quick in giving editorial decisions. If there's a delay, it's because a few editors are reading your article.

(6) Please bear with us—we have accumulated quite a backlog of material, and you may have to wait for a few issues before you see your article in print.

THE EDITORS □

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Julius Lester

Some Tickets Are Better

The Mixed Achievement of James Baldwin

With the publication of *The Price of the Ticket*,* James Baldwin presents the work on which he wants to be judged and by which he would like to be remembered. The volume contains fifty-one essays, twenty-five of them previously uncollected. The remaining twenty-six represent the entire contents of five previously published books: *The Devil Finds Work*, *No Name in the Street*, *Notes of a Native Son*, *Nobody Knows My Name*, and *The Fire Next Time*.

Arranged chronologically from February 1948 to January 1985, the essays are overpowering in their intensity and brilliance. Particularly in the essays from 1948 to *The Fire Next Time* (1963), Baldwin reveals himself to be a tremendously eloquent humanist.

His is not a romantic humanism, however, but a hard-edged, uninviting, and terrifying one.

> But our humanity is our burden, our life; we need not battle for it; we need only to do what is infinitely more difficult—that is, accept it. The failure of the protest novel lies in its rejection of life, the human being, the denial of his beauty, dread, power, in its insistence that it is his categorization alone which is real and which cannot be transcended. ("Everybody's Protest Novel")

In the essays of the first fifteen years Baldwin writes not only as a black writer pleading the cause of blacks, but as a black pleading the cause of humanity. Baldwin startles one by his use of "we," because sometimes he speaks not as a black but as an American.

> Our dehumanization of the Negro then is indivisible from our dehumanization of ourselves: the loss of our own identity is the price we pay for our annulment of his. ("Many Thousands Gone")

Baldwin's power as a writer lies in his ability to weave the deeply autobiographical with the political and social. There is no separation between Jimmy Baldwin, black child of Harlem, and James Baldwin, American. For him, the personal is never just personal, and the political never just political. Because he perceives himself not only as the individual James Baldwin but also as the black Everyman, his writing has a moral authority that would be dismissed as arrogant if so many had not affirmed what he wrote.

To call Baldwin a black writer, then, is not only to relegate him to a literary ghetto, it is to dismiss his testimony. In these early essays no writer is more American than this tiny black man who first saw light in Harlem in 1924. Despite all he has seen, despite all that has been done to him, his response is not a literature delineating the emptiness and alienation in which so many Americans live. His response is not a literature of smug ridicule or clever satire. He responds with that most intangible, bothersome and intrusive of emotions—love. And the object of his love is not only blacks; its object is the republic itself. If words alone could redeem, Baldwin's would have placed us all in that "shining city on a hill" to which the current occupant of the White House deludes himself into thinking his presidency shows the way.

**The Price of the Ticket: Collected Nonfiction 1948-1985* by James Baldwin. New York: St. Martin's/Marek. 690 pp. $29.95.

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From 1948 to 1963 Baldwin's message was more spiritual than political, more psychological than ideological, and it had two central elements: (1) The necessity for blacks to free themselves from white-imposed definitions; and (2) The necessity for whites to free themselves from their own definitions. As long as this mutual interdependence is unrecognized, blacks and whites will be unable to be human to themselves. And if one cannot be human to oneself, it is impossible to be human to another.

By 1960 Baldwin had honed this theme into one well-crafted sentence:

> It is a terrible, an inexorable, law that one cannot deny the humanity of another without diminishing one's own: in the face of one's victim, one sees oneself. ("Fifth Avenue Uptown")

Witness. That is how James Baldwin describes himself. Not many writers would be comfortable with that self-definition, or understand it, even. Elie Wiesel is the only one who comes to mind, and perhaps that is not coincidence. Both have dedicated—or is it sacrificed?—themselves to the sacred act of giving testimony to what they have seen. Yet, they write, not as prosecutors of those who inflicted the horrors, but as prophets praying to God to be merciful, a God neither is sure is really there, and if He is, whether He is listening or really cares. But they pray, nonetheless, for humanity to transform itself before God metes out His terrible justice.

Once when I pressed Baldwin to define witness, he said:

> I am a witness to whence I came, where I am, witness to what I've seen and the possibilities that I think I see. I began using the word when I began to be called a spokesman. I'm certainly not a spokesman and the only word I could find is that I'm trying to be a witness. A spokesman assumes that he is speaking for others. I never assumed that I could. What I tried to do, or to interpret and make clear was that what the republic was doing to black people it was doing to itself. No society can smash the social contract and be exempt from the consequences and the consequences are chaos for everybody in the society. In the church in which I was raised you were supposed to bear witness to the truth. Now, of course, later on you wonder what in the world the truth is, but you do know what a lie is.

It is this need to "bear witness" that gives Baldwin's writing its urgency and passion, its rhetoric the all-encompassing generalization and the long and, sometimes, too-complex sentences. Baldwin's prophetic voice is a melding of those of the preacher he once was and of the King James version of the Old Testament. The reader is left wondering if he or she is in the presence of a person putting words to paper, or of a force unleashed by history that howls outside our windows.

The publication of *The Fire Next Time* in 1963 was an important event in the history of the civil rights movement and of America. It was the year when Bull Connor unleashed police dogs and fire hoses on blacks demonstrating in Birmingham, Alabama: images that were seen on the nightly news and horrified the nation. *The Fire Next Time* was Baldwin's warning of the black violence that would inevitably come if white America did not confront its racism.

The book became a best-seller and made Baldwin a celebrity, because he was able to combine anger and humanism in such a way that whites could receive the anger, not as an unqualified condemnation of themselves, but as angry tears of righteousness for us all.

> . . . if the word *integration* means anything, this is what it means: that we, with love, shall force our brothers to see themselves as they are, to cease fleeing from reality and begin to change it. . . . We cannot be free until they are free.

Yet, in *The Fire Next Time* there is a small, but perceptible shift in Baldwin's humanism that becomes more pronounced and obvious in many of the essays after 1963.

> I could not share the white man's vision of himself for the very good reason that white men in America do not behave toward black men the way they behave toward each other. (*The Fire Next Time*)

But is that really true? "One cannot deny the humanity of another without diminishing one's own," Baldwin had written a few years earlier. If that is so (and I believe that it is), then white men in America do "behave toward each other" in the same way they behave toward

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blacks, but perhaps the ways are not so evident. Baldwin does not make the effort to get at what is not apparent.

The sweeping generalization has always been a hallmark of Baldwin's essays. He never questions or doubts that what he is witness to represents more than subjective experience. While this is the source of his power in *The Fire Next Time*, it is also the source of a weakness that will become more evident, a weakness wherein Baldwin will see, more and more, only what he wishes to see, and less and less make the effort to see what is.

In *The Fire Next Time* the humanistic Baldwin wrote of his concern for the "dignity" of blacks and for the "health" of their souls, and declared that he

> must oppose any attempt that Negroes may make to do to others what has been done to them. . . . It is so simple a fact and one that is so hard, apparently, to grasp: *Whoever debases others is debasing himself.* This is not a mystical statement but a realistic one, which is proved by the eyes of any Alabama sheriff—and I would not like to see Negroes ever arrive at so wretched a condition.

Many of the later essays of *The Price of the Ticket* are evidence that Baldwin has not been a voice of opposition—at least not publicly—when blacks have sought to do to others what has been done to them.

He did not oppose publicly the rhetorical excesses of the Black Power movement in the late 1960s. Nor has he sought to examine the meaning of Louis Farrakhan, the glint of whose eyes bears no small resemblance to those "of any Alabama sheriff."

Baldwin is more than eloquent when articulating that the sole salvation for whites is to take responsibility for the evil they have wrought:

> It has always been much easier (because it has always seemed much safer) to give a name to the evil without than to locate the terror within. And yet, the terror within is far truer and far more powerful than any of our labels: the labels change, the terror is constant. ("Nothing Personal")

Yet, he does not take the next step and say that blacks, too, must take responsibility, not only for the evil they have wrought, but even for the evil they have endured.

What has happened to James Baldwin since *The Fire Next Time* is that a black vision of the world has slowly gained precedence over his humanistic one. The roots of this lie, perhaps, in Baldwin's definition of himself as a witness and the responsibilities of a witness.

In a taped conversation I had with him a year and a half ago, I asked if Richard Wright had had a responsibility to him and did he have a responsibility to younger black writers.

> I never felt that Richard had a responsibility for me, and if he had, he'd discharged it. What I was thinking about, though, was the early fifties when the world was breaking up, when the world of white supremacy was breaking up. I'm talking about the revolutions all over the world, specifically since we were in Paris—Tunisia, Algeria, the ferment in Senegal, the French loss of their Indo-Chinese empire. A whole lot of people—darker people for the most part—came from all kinds of places to Richard's door as they do now to my door. And in that sense he had a responsibility which he didn't know—well, who can blame him? A boy from Ethiopia, a boy from Senegal—they all claimed him. They had the right to claim him like they have the right to claim me.

What is that right? I asked. Why did they have a right to claim him? Why do they have the right to claim you?

> Well, right or not, there he was to be claimed. He was the most articulate black witness of his moment. . . . Richard was known in Paris and they had a right to claim him, much more right than those who did claim him—Sartre, de Beauvoir, etcetera. . . . I was in a very funny position. The people who knocked on his door ended up sleeping on my floor. I knew something about it which Richard didn't know . . . someone who is not white and has managed to survive somehow and attempts to be in some way responsible—of course you're going to be claimed by multitudes of black kids. There's no way around it.

But can one be claimed without eventually being enslaved? It would be presumptuous of me to maintain that this is what has happened to Baldwin. Yet, reading *No Name in the Street* (1972) one is stunned by his lack of

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insight into the dangers represented by the Black Panther party as well as his sycophantic attitude toward Huey Newton and Eldridge Cleaver. In many of the essays of the 1970s and 1980s, it is not only what Baldwin says that is distressing, but, equally, that he fails to demand that blacks risk the terror and burden of being human as he demands it of whites.

His review of Alex Haley's *Roots* could have been written by any black writer beating the drum of blackness. It is not James Baldwin in fearful pursuit of truth but Baldwin imitating himself poorly. At the end of the review one sees the philosophical consequences of allowing one's self to be claimed: "It [*Roots*] suggests, with great power, how each of us, however unconsciously, can't but be the vehicle of the history which has produced us." This kind of historical determinism is damaging, because it denies human responsibility, not for history itself but for what we do with history.

The most disturbing of the later essays is "An Open Letter to the Born Again." Published in the *Nation* (September 29, 1979), it was written in the bitter aftermath of Andrew Young's resignation as U.N. ambassador, when black leaders excoriated Jews for their perceived role in that resignation. Throughout his career Baldwin has written thoughtfully and insightfully about black-Jewish relations. While he has sometimes come close to what some consider anti-Semitic statements, one always gave him the benefit of the doubt because he was James Baldwin. With "An Open Letter to the Born Again" one can do so no longer.

> But the State of Israel was not created for the salvation of the Jews; it was created for the salvation of the Western interest. This is what is becoming clear (I must say that it was always clear to me). The Palestinians have been paying for the British colonial policy of "divide and rule" and for Europe's guilty Christian conscience for more than thirty years.

Regardless of one's views on Israel, Baldwin's assertions have the uninformed certainty of barbershop opinion. His propensity for cosmic generalizations leads him to conclude that:

> The Jew, in America, is a white man. He has to be, since I am a black man, and, as he supposes, his only protection against the fate which drove him to America. But he is still doing the Christian's dirty work, and black men know it.

Yet, in Baldwin's earlier essays there are noble statements which argue against defining others solely on the basis of one's own experience, which challenge us to live on the razor's edge of risk and vulnerability.

As one follows the journey of James Baldwin over the past thirty-seven years, one must wonder if the terror within has worn him down, if he no longer has the strength to throw himself into the abyss to find the tiny nuggets of truth which only he was able to find.

Or, is it that, having permitted himself to be claimed by black people, he has abdicated the lonely responsibility of the artist and intellectual to be claimed by nothing but that futile and beautiful quest for Truth?

It was Baldwin himself who wrote in 1962 that

> . . . the truth, in spite of appearances and all our hopes, is that everything is always changing and the measure of our maturity as nations and as men is how well prepared we are to meet these changes and, further, to use them for our health. ("The Creative Process")

It is not easy to be so critical of Baldwin. That his writings have made a significant difference in the way many of us, black and white, view ourselves and each other is indisputable. Read as a body, the essays of James Baldwin are a sustaining act of love and faith of which America has not been worthy.

Perhaps it is too much to ask that any one writer sustain love and faith throughout a life of terror. Perhaps it is too much to ask him to return again and again to the abyss. The price of such excursions is high and one pays in one's soul and body. Perhaps, then, no one asks another to do more than he or she can, and instead lovingly laments the absence of the growth that we would want for that person—and ourselves.

In the last essay of *The Price of the Ticket* there are these words:

> The object of one's hatred is never, alas, conveniently outside but is seated in one's lap, stirring

(Continued on p. 214)

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Ernest Erber

The Corporate Raiders

New Light on Corporate Ownership vs. Control

Based on impressions gathered from the media in the course of the past year, the canyons of Lower Manhattan, in the vicinity of the Wall Street Corral, have been reverberating with the sounds of shoot-outs as a puzzled public tries to make sense of reports that corporations with such household familiarity as CBS, TWA, and Phillips Petroleum are under "hostile takeover" attack from "raiders" with such intriguing names as T. Boone Pickens, Irwin "The Liquidator" Jacobs, and Sir James Goldsmith.

Meanwhile, over 2,000 miles away, a shock wave of fear hits Bartlesville, Oklahoma, headquarters of Phillips, upon news that the dreaded Pickens has announced a takeover raid against the hometown company. Its employees and other townspeople close ranks around "their" company, displaying a siege psychology resembling their great-grandparents' reaction to word that "The Comanches are coming!" Clergymen organize 24-hour prayer vigils. Teenagers don "Boone-buster" T-shirts. A mass meeting of nearly 4,000 citizens hears Phillips executives, local businessmen, and politicians upbraid Pickens, and the audience joins in belting out anti-Pickens ballads. The local Chamber of Commerce organizes phone banks to convince Phillips shareholders to turn down all offers by Pickens—regardless of how lucrative—to buy their stock.

The panic is not confined to Bartlesville. Phillips employees throughout the U.S. anxiously await word on the outcome, as do those working in foreign countries, on drilling platforms in the North Sea, and aboard tankers on the high seas. They all have heard of Pickens by reputation: "the scourge of the oil patch," an accolade (or epithet) earned for having driven such giant companies as Gulf and Cities Service out of business, selling out to avoid being taken over. ("They were not street fighters," Pickens observed.) They also know that other companies, such as Supron, Superior, and General American, have paid Pickens millions in "greenmail" to leave them alone.

In Pittsburgh, a row breaks out in the upper echelons of the Mellon Bank as Jerry McAfee, retired board chairman of the now defunct Gulf Oil Company, resigns from the bank's advisory board to protest its $150 million loan to Pickens to underwrite, in effect, his raid on Phillips which, McAfee argues, is a threat to the established order of the corporate world. In Delaware, Louisiana, and Texas, courts receive suits filed either by Phillips against Pickens or vice versa (with Pickens charging Phillips with hiring private investigators who "harassed" him and "invaded" his privacy).

When Pickens announces, as reassurance, that he doesn't intend to liquidate Phillips, that he and his wife will be glad to move to Bartlesville upon taking over the company, he is told that they won't be welcome. And when he appears on Capitol Hill to testify before a congressional committee, his outstretched hand is rejected by another witness, the head of Unocal, an oil company also threatened by him. Pickens responds to the snub by quipping, "That's a strange way to treat your largest shareholder!" Unocal's head and board chairman, Fred L. Hartley, tells reporters later that he sees no reason to shake hands with Pickens, who has indeed invested heavily in Unocal—"Not because he thinks we're a good company, but because he thinks he's gonna rape us one way or the other."

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The media reader and listener, absorbing all this information, has trouble making sense of it. Pickens, after all, is not a gangster, a drug-ring operator, or the head of a Las Vegas gambling syndicate. His picture has appeared on the cover of *Time* and the press has featured him as the highest-paid executive in the U.S. (his salary and bonus for 1984: $4.223 million—while the second highest is $2.866 million).

Why the hostility from his corporate peers, and from most of the media? True, Pickens receives this obscenely big salary from a modestly sized company, as oil companies go. Mesa Petroleum, which he heads, has only 650 employees, compared to Mobil's 178,900, Exxon's 150,000, and Texaco's 68,088, which tells us how far down Mesa ranks on a list of American oil companies. No one accuses Pickens of criminal conduct. "He doesn't break laws, but he does break tradition," says the head of Chevron, to whom tradition probably ranks higher than the law. What Pickens is doing (or trying to do), buying companies and then selling them whole or in parts, seems to be what all the business executives are into these days. And he is superbly good at it; his efforts have *netted* more than $800 million for Mesa and its associates in the past three years—not bad for a company whose total oil sales did not *gross* much more than that.

Although Pickens controls Mesa, he does not own it; his shares in the company hardly exceed 2% of its outstanding stock. He evidently has better uses for his money; Mesa pays its shareholders rather modest dividends. But Mesa's board—which Pickens selects, in standard corporate practice—has been fair in compensating Pickens, recognizing that the $800 million he brought home from his raids was the product of his personal genius. And so, in addition to his outstanding salary and bonus, Mesa last year voted Pickens long-range compensation (stock options, and so on) amounting to some $18.6 million.

Yet, being a corporate raider is not an easy task, guaranteeing success. Even Pickens, for all his recognized brilliance as a raider, has never succeeded in taking over a company (assuming that was his objective). He has forced some corporations to take refuge in the arms of competitors, as a lesser evil, and he has inflicted such severe financial wounds on others that they might bleed to death in the near future—but, so far, all have escaped his grasp.

The difficulties facing the raider in trying to take over a corporation by buying its stock can be gleaned from the frustrations experienced by Sir James Goldsmith, the British financier now engaged in hostile takeover maneuvers of American companies. Though he had bought over 50 percent of the shares of the Crown Zellerbach Company, producer of paper products and owner of extensive harvestable forests, control of the company has eluded him. As the *New York Times* reported on July 23, 1985:

> Sir James, who has bitterly opposed a restructuring plan that would carve the company into three entities, said yesterday that he had acquired 51.3% of Crown Zellerbach's shares, placing in doubt whether the company would go ahead with its plan. Although his majority interest gives Sir James considerable sway, it is insufficient under the company's bylaws to effect such major developments as changing the board, altering the bylaws themselves, or thwarting the restructuring plan.

Subsequently, Crown Zellerbach's management agreed to accommodate his interests, which seem to be control of the company's vast forest holdings.

Sir James indeed has been successful in taking over several American paper-products companies, divesting or selling large parts of the companies, except for their forest reserves, which he adds to his sizable accumulation. What does Sir James want with all those trees? It is unlikely that he is a secret conservationist out to save the wilderness. More likely, he has observed how Americans use and misuse paper products, and he would like to control as much of the ultimate source of all that paper as possible. He has noted that paper is used lavishly when Americans eat, blow their noses and perform other bodily functions, making paper the badge of our civilization (from the Stone Age to Bronze, to Iron, to Paper)—and that it takes a lot of trees to keep them supplied.

Sir James makes a simple claim: that the owner of the majority of a corporation's shares

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should have the right to control it. If denied, he threatens to go to court. And Crown Zellerbach's executives *have* gone to court, to sue Sir James for confusing and manipulating the firm's shareholders. It is unlikely that, if there is a trial, a landmark decision will result. The courts are not yet ready for that; it would go to the heart of the dilemma of managerial capitalism—power without property.

Most Americans have trouble trying to understand why Sir James does not control what he owns, or why Pickens is so feared and hated, or why takeovers are considered hostile and upset so many people. In interpreting these events within the context of their image of how our economy is structured and how it functions, even otherwise well-informed persons are handicapped by lack of adequate knowledge of the large corporation as it actually exists and operates as opposed to the avowed theory of its governance, involving stockholders' meetings, proxies, boards of directors, and so on.

The public's perception suffers most with regard to those swiftly moving developments affecting corporations as a result of technological breakthroughs and the consequent institutional restructuring needed to take timely advantage of them, and enabling a corporation to compete and survive. Among such new developments are: the increasing pressure upon executives to use the company's earnings for modernization and expansion of productive facilities, leaving less for distribution of dividends; the increasing ratio of debt to capital; more frequent recourse to capital markets, which are undergoing change with the emergence and power of the new breed of money managers; the rise in stock ownership by institutions, mainly pension funds, and their off-market trading of huge blocks of shares; the increasing treatment of equities as short-term holdings (buy on Tuesday, sell on Friday), subjecting management to the daily pressures of volatile prices; finally, and the subject of this article, management's search for protective devices to insulate its control from "outside" interference—that is, from raiders who emerge as owners of large amounts of the company's stock.

What has been said about the inadequate information given to the public-at-large in regard to the corporation's changing situation is also true of many people on the political left. Many on the left still conceive of capitalism—although we now speak of a present "late-capitalist" era—in images formed by reading Marx's descriptions of entrepreneurial capitalism in England over a century ago, rather than by contemporary managerial forms of capitalism—although Marx himself wrote, in *The Communist Manifesto*, that "the bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society." Capitalism's form and mode of operation surely has been "revolutionized" several times since 1848, with only the vaguest awareness on the part of the general public.

What is going on? What, exactly, are hostile takeovers anyway—and how do they work? Who should care—and why? And how does an understanding of this process add to our knowledge of who owns and who controls large corporations? Is there really a "managerial revolution" in progress? And if so, what are its prospects, especially in view of the recent, unprecedented emergence of the corporations' employees, both where organized and where not, as players of a key role in deciding takeover battles?

When Adolph A. Berle and Gardiner C. Means published their classic *The Modern Corporation and Private Property* in 1932, its thesis of corporate control without ownership had the impact of a new revelation, though the phenomenon they described had existed for some time (new evidence shows that its origins were much earlier than they suspected). Similarly, management's vulnerability to corporate takeovers has always been present in the very nature of its role, partly arrogated and partly inherent in the division of labor in large institutions. But it took the recent power plays by the raiders to reveal that under certain circumstances management's awesome authority is at risk and subject to termination, a revelation that caused panic to sweep through many an executive suite.

The raids revealed that management's war-

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rant of authority was, basically, de facto and ad hoc rather than de jure. The raiders, on the other hand, were operating, not only on the basis of law, but also upon the property-based traditions of capitalism. Simply put, *the successful managerial revolution had failed to legitimize itself in law.* This was not a case of neglect. The difficulties are inherent in management's contradictory and ambiguous status: wielding autocratic power over property (specifically, over the large corporation), without ownership of it—within a social system (capitalism) that, historically, has made ownership of property (specifically, owership of capital) the basis of power and control. The hectic scrambling now underway to create the de jure defenses for management is not likely to resolve this contradiction (providing perhaps a few strands of barbed wire, but no Maginot Line).

That this contradiction should exist speaks to the systemic crisis of capitalism as a social order. It is an aspect of the critical conflict between the developmental needs of the process of production and the constraints placed upon it by the social relations of capitalism. In the lifetime of Marx, who first identified and described this conflict, its existence was more easily noted, since ownership then was proprietorial, usually in the control of an extended family, and at most in a partnership. These ownership forms acted as a brake on the growth of industry and commerce, and on efforts to exploit new opportunities for growth opened up by the railroad, the telegraph, and steam-powered machinery.

One of the problems with family-owned enterprise was that of succession; upon the death of a principal, the oldest son usually succeeded him. As demonstrated over and over again by the disasters visited upon nations by the monarchal right of succession, there is no guarantee of competence for business management in lineal descent within family firms (the genius of Henry Ford was followed by Edsel).

Capitalism, however, is not only beset by contradictions, it also possesses an ingenuity for contriving a seemingly endless number of institutional adaptations to resolve its contradictions in whole or in part (and invariably triggering new ones). One such adaptation was the invention of the business corporation, beginning with the early joint-stock companies that were originally simply enlarged and glorified partnerships, leading in time to the development of the modern, "public" corporation. The business corporation was itself an adaptation of the corporate form devised originally for ecclesiastical, educational, eleemosynary, municipal, or other public-serving institutions—going back to the Middle Ages and conceived as a privileged form granted by the sovereign and limited by the terms and obligations of its charter.

The business corporation is remarkable for its institutional versatility. This is especially true of the unique attributes it assumed in the United States, where courts could not decide for a long time just what the corporation was and what it was empowered to do. This continued to be the case even after Chief Justice Marshall's classic finding in 1816 that the corporation was a person in the eyes of the law, having all the attributes of a person, except—as old-time socialist soap-boxers delighted in pointing out—possession of a soul! Since Marshall held that the corporation was immortal, an attribute not granted to humans, he probably viewed this last point as moot.

Corporations in the U.S., in contrast to those in Europe (especially on the Continent), were eventually given carte-blanche authority by statute and by case law to engage in every type of activity legally permissible to a person. This was brought about largely by the courts deciding that the chartering of corporations was within the jurisdiction of the individual states under the federal Constitution, and by the competition of states to lure national corporations to seek their charters from these states for the sake of the fees this brought in. In this cynical and shameless competition to constantly reduce required obligations of public service and accountability as conditions of the charter, New Jersey and Delaware prevailed—and, finally, only Delaware. As a consequence of so many of the largest corporations being chartered in Delaware, its courts have fashioned much of the case law controlling corporate governance and thus figure prominently in management's current efforts to seek de jure protection from the raiders.

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The emergence of the business corporation as an institution operated by a hierarchy of salaried managers was paralleled by another invention born of necessity: the capital markets—stocks, bonds, and so on, with their network of linkages—acting to facilitate the flow of investment money to where it was needed (and would accumulate most rapidly). Thus capital could flow throughout the nation and throughout the world, to areas promising development and opportunity, and to growing industries. These two institutional "inventions" facilitated expansion and progress and enabled corporate management to dip into anonymous, "impersonal" pools of "public" capital. Thus they had the effect of "revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production," to use the language of Marx. This new condition facilitated the overcoming of the restraints imposed upon productive forces by archaic patterns of ownership. Thus America's productive forces were catapulted far beyond those of any other nation. And this, in turn, introduced the institution of managerial capitalism, which soon became the dominant form. The outstanding characteristic of the changed "relations of production" was that power to control the corporations passed to the upper strata of managers, and ownership was reduced to what came to be viewed as an empty legal form represented by stock certificates.

Empty legal form? Not entirely. Although the studies of a handful of scholars and serious publicists concerned with the institutional status of the corporation concluded that stock certificates have joined the halberd and the battle-ax as archaic instruments of warfare, today's corporate raiders, such as T. Boone Pickens, have proved otherwise. Indeed, all that Pickens was armed with were stock certificates. And, in the case of Phillips Petroleum, he had only enough of them to vote 5 percent of the company's shares. Pickens, however, did state that he had enough money ($900 million, mostly borrowed) to buy 15 million more shares—giving him another 9.7 to 14.7 percent in total. But before we continue with this story, which has a surprising twist (possibly of historic significance), let me try to make clear what the fuss over hostile takeovers amounts to, what we might learn from them—and why so many people in the business and financial community and in the media have it in for Pickens.

What, then, indeed, is going on? Why, after decades (in some industries, a whole century) of virtually unchallenged managers' power and control have large corporations now become vulnerable to outsiders who buy a relatively sizable block of stock in their company and suddenly appear to challenge management for control? And why should this be happening only now? What has changed to bring this about? There are, of course, several reasons. In many industries and for many firms, market prices of stocks have tended to be undervalued compared to the liquidation value of the corporation. A number of factors account for this —among them: the high interest rates that have caused investors to buy bonds and shun stocks, depressing their value; decreased or even skipped dividends, especially during the deep recession of 1981–83; drops in the price of oil and other natural resources (timber) making them attractive to acquire toward future price rises (Pickens said, "It is cheaper to drill for oil on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange than out in the field"); the invention by Drexel, Burnham & Lambert, hottest takeover specialists on Wall Street, of "junk bonds" (I.O.U.s payable after the takeover, using the company's assets); and management's failure to install antiraider devices. Also, and we can only touch briefly on this big and important subject here, the American corporate world is undergoing a major, technologically driven transformation and restructuring, perhaps the biggest since the turn of the century, causing management to retain more earnings and take on more debt to spend on new technology, meanwhile being forced to allow their stock to drift downward. (These trends began to change with the bull market early in 1985, though the stock of many corporations and entire industries remained priced within takeover range.)

In a corporation with tens or even hundreds of thousands of shareholders, with the biggest usually owning no more than 1 percent of the shares, the ability of a raider who has acquired

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5 or 10 percent to prevail is a foregone conclusion. Though this pattern of stock ownership is becoming increasingly typical, it is by no means universal. Although the concentrated holdings of rich families are decreasing, further dispersal of stock ownership is being offset by growing blocks owned by institutional investors. The full import of this development is not yet clear.

When a takeover threatens, the managers, of course, do not sit idly by waiting to have their company taken over and their jobs given to someone else. Management has a wide range of options for defensive moves and is sure to avail itself of them. It also has command of the company's treasury, borrowing power, the current knowledge of who the shareholders are, and the power to manipulate the corporation's financial structure in order to reduce the raider's power. This highly complex and extensive subject is beyond the scope of this article, as is management's recent intensified drive to secure protective legislation at federal and state levels. (Some 37 states now have antiraider legislation of varying effectiveness, with efforts to strengthen them found unconstitutional by federal courts.) New York's recently enacted law curbing use of junk bonds in takeovers

Glossary

The takeover terminology of Wall Street conveys images reminiscent of the zaniness of *The Wizard of Oz* and the grim portents of science fiction. These terms provide an insight, not only into today's takeover practices and defenses against them, but also into the outlook and value system of the practitioners.

Bear Hug: Raider offers to buy company at fixed terms before going public with offer to buy shares from stockholders at an above-market price. In a "Strong Bear Hug," raider offers to buy company while simultaneously making offer to shareholders. In a "Superstrong Bear Hug," the offer to buy has a threat attached to it; failure to accept the offer will result in successive reductions of the offering price.

Black Book: Announcement of defensive steps management will take in event of a hostile takeover effort; designed to warn and scare off raiders.

Godfather Offer: An offer so adequate in price and terms that the target company's board cannot refuse it without laying itself open to a shareholder suit for dereliction of fiduciary responsibility.

Golden Parachute: Contract between corporation and its upper-echelon executives for compensation if forced to resign pursuant to a successful takeover. Compensation usually runs into millions of dollars in the form of severance pay, bonuses, stock options, paid-up insurance policies, annuities, etc.

Greenmail: Money paid to a raider by the threatened corporation to buy back the raider's shares at above-market value, assuring him a large profit, plus reimbursement of his expenses (a vastly inflated figure) in return for an agreement by the raider to give up efforts to take over the corporation, both at present and in the future.

Junk Bonds: Old Wall Street term for high-risk bonds with little or no collateral but calling for an unusually high rate of return; now used by raiders to designate I.O.U.s, partly or wholly, in lieu of cash when buying shares of a targeted company.

Pac-Man Defense: A counteroffensive move by a threatened corporation: making a tender offer for the shares of the raider's corporation—to frighten off the raider by threatening control of his own corporation.

Poison Pill: A defensive move by management to make a threatened takeover so expensive that the raider loses interest. The target corporation, for example, gives its shareholders securities redeemable for cash when and if the company is taken over.

Saturday Night Special: A sudden offer that is cheap and goes off quickly.

Scorched Earth: Management's moves to make the company less attractive to a raider by destroying part of its potential (or, in extreme situations, all of it) by, for example, selling off profitable operations or physical assets and/or incurring heavy indebtedness.

Shark Repellent: Management's defensive measures to make a takeover more difficult, stipulating, for instance, that major decisions affecting the corporation require approval of at least 75 percent of shares; issuing nonvoting stock; staggering the terms of qualifying board members; and, very recently, giving a high proportion of the company's stock to its employees.

White Knight: A friendly corporation that is induced to "ride to the rescue" of a threatened one by offering to take it over at a price and terms that are better than those of the raider; such terms almost always include continued satisfactory employment for the threatened firm's executives. □

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seems to portend a new round of such laws and their passage by the states at the behest of major corporations within their boundaries. This new law, however, has yet to be tested in the courts.

But if the raider takes control of the company, we've asked, who cares? Or, if the company avoids being taken over by going deeply into debt to pay "greenmail" to the raiders, who should care?

Obviously, the executives of the target company care. After a hostile takeover, they are usually let go. Their suffering is hardly financial, being usually alleviated by a "golden parachute" of severance pay, annuities, stock options, stock ownership, and so on. But it is a blow to their egos and can wreck their careers. With all the types of suffering in the world, to be sure, their plight can have little claim on our already sorely taxed compassion. It is worth noting, though, that this method of determining industrial leadership causes a terrible waste of talent and accumulated experience.

How far down into the ranks of management the raider's purge extends depends upon a great variety of different circumstances, from liquidation to divestiture to merger with the raider's company, or even the infusion of new capital and expansion under a more aggressive leadership.

The company's lower-echelon employees, whether salaried or wage-earners, are always concerned and frequently hurt by a takeover. Invariably changes ensue that affect them, and rarely for the better. The headquarters might be moved to a distant part of the country; plants might be closed, product lines or services discontinued; union contracts may be terminated or renegotiated; new personnel policies instituted with regard to pensions, vacations, work rules, seniority, or promotions. Whatever the hostility that might have existed toward the old management, familiar problems are preferable to unknown ones. Often the worst is expected because of the raider's appeals to shareholders before the takeover that the change will result in more cost-effective management, tougher bargaining with labor, elimination of jobs, closing-down of facilities, and payment of higher dividends.

The same sort of concerns extend to the local community, its merchants, professionals, and institutions—all who are beneficiaries of the purchasing power based on the company's payroll. These concerns also affect the company's suppliers and subcontractors and their employees. They might extend to the distributors of the company's products, and even to the ultimate users. They also involve the industry at large, and the national economy.

If any socially redeeming purpose can be cited for the transfer of hundreds of millions of dollars to the raiders in recent years in the form of "greenmail," it has not come to notice. In the wake of their forays are only debt-ridden and weakened companies. So the nation should care. This is hardly a way to run a national economy.

How, then, does the corporate raiding experience add to our knowledge of who owns and who controls America's large corporations?

What it has added to our knowledge is the extent of corporate managements' vulnerability to takeover raids; that under certain circumstances ownership of stock certificates is not an empty legal form; that managerial capitalism, after being dominant for between 50 to 100 years, still lacks de jure security of status; that the property-based ethos of capitalism limits management's authority to de facto and ad hoc status, though innumerable devices give it partial protection; that the legitimacy of the modern business corporation, long in dispute, is still not established.

But the hostile takeover efforts have also added to our knowledge of how difficult it is to remove an entrenched management, even when the raider has billions of dollars to use in the attempt and is counseled by a phalanx of Wall Street's most skilled and sophisticated strategists and top-flight practitioners of corporate law. This warfare has revealed that management possesses the equivalent of a medieval castle, while the raiders command the equivalent of a rock-propelling catapult. But even under those conditions of technological disparity, castles *were* taken. And, as has been observed, technology, over time, shifts the advantage back and forth between the offense and the defense. The coming of artillery made

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castles vulnerable. Will large-block, institutional stock ownership prove to be the artillery of this warfare?

The 14 largest private money-management firms (with Bankers Trust, Morgan Guaranty, and Citicorp the top three) manage some $140 billion worth of stock. And then there are the pension funds. That wily veteran of California politics, Jesse Unruh, now state treasurer and head of the $24-billion California Public Employees Retirement System, together with Harrison J. Goldin, New York's knowledgeable city comptroller, are organizing the heads of public pension funds into a Council of Institutional Investors, already representing some $90 billion in investments. If Picken's could draw upon resources of this scale, the walls would come tumbling down! Unruh's and Goldin's public statements on takeovers are on the shareholders' side, not that of management. They are responsive to Pickens's charge that shareholders are being shortchanged by management. In the midst of Pickens's raid on Phillips, Unruh and Goldin summoned Pickens and the Phillips management to appear before them at the Investment Council's New York offices to present their arguments and appeals for support. This could prove to be an ominous harbinger of the pension-fund artillery coming into action in takeover warfare. If Ted Turner could have made a deal with Unruh and Goldin, CBS would now be in his hip pocket.

Why Pickens is detested by his peers in management would be clear if you were the head of a large corporation, busily dreaming, scheming, and working on a long-range strategic plan to double production and sales, and had to do this while constantly looking over your shoulder to see what Pickens or some other raider, who is eyeing you, is up to. For example, while Phillips was busy fighting off Pickens, the corporation's biggest problem, to which it should have been free to give undivided attention, was the collapsing seabed under Phillips's drilling rigs in the North Sea off Norway. When Pickens's distracting raid began, the heads of Phillips were engaged in designing and funding a $1.5 billion project to pump water and gas under the floor of the North Sea to save their drilling platforms.

More generally, managements see Pickens and his type as an irresponsible threat to managerial capitalism. Growled Unocal's Hartley, "Gulf got destroyed, it's gone. Phillips is maybe half gone. These people are pious piranhas, walking away with tens of millions and happy to let society collapse." "Society," of course, in Hartley's eyes, is the appropriate management of corporations by their executives, undisturbed by money-hungry raiders who galvanize shareowners to interfere with management's prerogatives.

One cannot argue with Hartley when he observes, "What all this comes down to is simply withdrawing the warm blood of equity and replacing it with the cold water of debt." The nation's total corporate debt, warns a worried Paul Volcker, is rising faster than even the spiraling debt of the federal government. Raiders contribute to this trend by diverting earnings from asset building for capital improvements to debt service. This might also be a clue as to why the raiders find it possible to get bank underwriting. Banks, after all, are in the lending business.

We have also asked, Is the "managerial revolution" for real? That depends. It is not a dispute over facts or, at least, it should not be. The facts are clear. It is a matter of theory: How does one interpret the facts?*

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* Both factual information and theoretical interpretations of ownership vs. control of corporations is contained in a voluminous literature going back to the early decades of this century. Work by Thorstein Veblen, William Z. Ripley, and the ubiquitous J. M. Keynes preceded the Berle and Means classic, while in its wake came work of such scholars as J. A. Schumpeter, J. K. Galbraith, Arthur S. Miller, Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., Herman Daems, James Willard Hurst, Edward S. Herman, Edward S. Mason, John Lintner, Robin Marris, Paul Baran, Paul Sweezy, R. Larner, Walter Werner, David Kotz, and, I am sure, others. The most recent addition is the work of Beth Mintz and Michael Schwartz in *The Power Structure of American Business* (1985). Though this vast literature contains theories that vary from conservative to radical perspectives on the development of corporations, the *fact* of managerial control is assumed.

James Burnham's *The Managerial Revolution* (1941), though making no claim to be a scholarly work, is doubtless the best known and most widely referenced work on the subject, largely because of its historical and global sweep and brilliance of argumentation. Burnham's book—written either contemporaneously with or immediately after Bruno Rizzi's *La Bureaucratisation*

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The reality is that America's large corporations are controlled lock, stock, and barrel by "hired" managers. Even old Frederick Engels knew this back in 1882 when he observed that the bourgeoisie was becoming a "superfluous class," with "all its social functions . . . performed by salaried employees." This truth is denied today only by some primitive apologists for capitalism, like George Gilder, and by some equally primitive Marxists who think they speak in Marx's name. For reasons only somewhat obscure, this type of Marxist is convinced that the theory of managerial capitalism is some kind of dirty trick perpetrated to conceal the "real" capitalists who manipulate the strings from behind the scenes. There just has to be one of Art Young's pot-bellied gentlemen with stovepipe hat and diamond stickpin in there somewhere.

How can one deny the reality of managerial capitalism—when over 2,600 corporations have more than 1,000 shareholders each, over 500 have more than 10,000 shareholders each, over 70 have more than 100,000 shareholders each, and two corporations (GM and AT&T) have more than a million shareholders each? (Please note: shareholders, not shares.) How can 1,000 shareholders or more (scattered over the whole country and the whole world) exercise any control over the company they theoretically "own"—especially when for many of them their "ownership" is a matter of a few days or a few months?

With the conventional wisdom being to diversify one's portfolio, rather than putting one's eggs into one basket, there is a tendency to avoid committing too much investment to any one corporation. Even company presidents, who are given stock options to buy into their own company, tend to sell them as soon as possible to buy into a wide range of investments. As a result, the typical shareholders today do not see themselves as part owners of a company, but only as investors. If the stock pays, they keep it; if not, they sell it. Most investors make little distinction in principle between "buying into the company" (stocks) or lending it money (bonds). It is all a matter of which yields a higher return. Thus ownership of 0.5 percent of the company's shares can make one its largest stockholder. A study shows that in most companies the shares owned by its officers and board members are under 0.5 percent.

So who owns the large corporations? The answer, in the words of the ballad, is "blowing in the wind": *Nobody owns the large corporations.* When capitalism moved from family ownership to corporations, it also moved from property-based ownership to no ownership. This is, to use Engels's formulation, in "partial recognition of the social character of the productive forces" or, as more frequently put, "the socialization of production." How else describe it when General Motors has 696,000 employees and 1.36 million "owners"?

"It is very difficult for the layman to grasp the fact that *no one owns* a big corporation like General Motors," notes David T. Bazelon. "The ordinary way of thinking about property and things produces a certain horror at the idea of anything so big and so valuable striding the earth unowned" (*The Paper Economy*, 1959).

When the president of Metropolitan Life (over $50 billion in assets) appeared before a Senate committee several years ago and was asked, "Who owns Metropolitan?" he startled the committee by answering, "Nobody." This was attributed to the fact that Metropolitan, a mutual, has no stockholders. But since stockholders have become almost meaningless to the governance of a large corporation, this answer can apply to the status of every large corpora-

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du monde (1939), which is of the same genre in form and of similar conceptualization—goes beyond corporate control to revive concepts first formulated by Michael Bakunin in the 1860s to the effect that a "new class" of owners of knowledge (intellectuals, technicians, managers, etc.) will use it as a new form of capital for the control of the economy and, eventually, all of society. Though history's jury is still out on Burnham's overarching projections, a current rereading of the book gives an impression of too much contrived schemata, some obvious misconceptions, and ill-founded expectations.

David T. Bazelon's *The Paper Economy* (1959) is, probably, the best popular treatment of corporate ownership and control. It stands up well on current reading, containing a vivid description of paper entrepreneurship, a theme recently revived in Robert B. Reich's *The Next American Frontier* (1983).

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tion. (To make share-owning even more meaningless, an increasing number of companies, including GM, are issuing shares without voting rights.)

No one owns the large corporations, but they do have caretakers. Managerial capitalism is a prolonged era of "caretaker government" of the economy. Managerial capitalism is filling in between proprietorial (or entrepreneurial, if you prefer) capitalism and . . . and? Meanwhile, Congress and the courts recognize the managers' caretaker status but refuse to give them de jure recognition. The managers have not succeeded, either through legislation or adjudication, to resolve their ambivalent, contradictory status of power without property. "In the beginning Congress was uptight about takeovers and was leaning toward antitakeover legislation," reports *Forbes* (which advertises itself as "The Capitalist Tool"), "but Pickens's effective testifying has reportedly changed the mood back to laissez-faire."

Decisions by the courts, congressional legislation, state statutes, and SEC and Federal Reserve regulations aim for even-handedness in protecting the corporations from the worst dangers of raiding, mainly by requirements that slow down the raiders. But they have not found a way to give management the kind of protection it wants without violating basic property rights. What (or whom) are they waiting for that might resolve this dilemma?

Mentioning Pickens's testifying on this question brings to mind that, before ending this article, we'll want to see how his shoot-out with Phillips ended. To get right to the point: Pickens drew blood; one might say that Phillips hemorrhaged for a while. Some knowledgeable sources predict that, as a result of blood loss, Phillips might not survive the chill winds of the next recession. But it was not only Pickens with whom Phillips had to contend. When Pickens had drawn enough blood ($89 million) and departed, Carl Icahn appeared on the scene, drawn by the smell of blood and sure that he could finish off the weakened Phillips. (For the same reasons there also appeared Irwin "The Liquidator" Jacobs.) Icahn, however, settling for what he could get ($50 million), departed when his prospects dimmed as Phillips received an unexpected blood transfusion ($1.5 billion). The surprise transfusion saved Phillips and permitted it to undergo surgery in the form of major capital restructuring. Though heavily burdened, Phillips was among the walking wounded.

Phillips managed to survive when, in a surprise move, it turned to its employees to save it. The employees served as the conduit for the $1.5 billion transfusion by means of an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP). This move also locked the gates against further raids. The Phillips management, counting on the employees' determination to save the company in order to save their jobs, set up an ESOP that made the employees "owners" of one-third of the company. The ESOP borrowed $1.5 billion, using company assets as collateral, to buy an estimated one-third of Phillips common stock, with which the employees will be counted on to vote against raiders. The loan will be repaid with the annual contributions Phillips will make to the ESOP over a period of seven years or more. During this period the ESOP shares will be under trusteeship, with employees receiving their shares in increments as the loan is retired, but not being permitted to vote them until the loan is retired. Meanwhile, the company immediately has the cash from the loan to use, among other purposes, to pay for the overpriced (greenmail) shares it was forced to buy back from Pickens and Icahn and, possibly, to permit the company to buy back shares on the open market, reducing the pool in which raiders might fish anew. Thus Phillips emerged, bloody but alive. There was dancing in the streets of Bartlesville, much welcomed by those who had been on their knees in those 24-hour prayer vigils.

This was not the first time that an ESOP was used to ward off a takeover. It saved two textile companies last year, Dan River, Inc., and the Cone Mills Corporation, from takeover efforts of the omnipresent Icahn. An ESOP also became the means by which the U.S. Sugar Corporation went private, with the employees owning 47 percent of the company. (The well-publicized buy-out of National Steel in Weirton, W.Va., by its employees also went the ESOP route.)

ESOPs have proved financially attractive to corporations because of tax incentives adopted

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by Congress in recent years upon the urging of Senator Russell Long, powerful crusader for ESOPs as a form of people's capitalism. These incentives consist of tax breaks to companies that offer stock to their employees, up to 25 percent of a payroll. Banks and other lenders to ESOPs do not have to pay taxes on half of the interest on such loans, permitting ESOPs to borrow at 80 percent of the prime rate. Another tax break makes dividends tax-free that are paid on stocks held by a company's employees as part of an ESOP. Misuse and abuse of ESOPs by management to save its own neck is rampant. But because ESOPs, even in the worst cases, are a modification of the wage relationship, their potential is enormous.

According to the National Center for Employee Ownership, the number of employee stock-and-bonus plans has climbed to more than 7,000, covering over 10 million workers, compared to 843 plans and 520,000 workers in 1976. "Within the next year, you are going to see more and more companies using the leveraged ESOP as a centerpiece in their preparations against hostile takeovers," according to Ken Miller, head of mergers and acquisitions at Merrill Lynch Capital Markets. "History has shown that employees tend to look unkindly on unsolicited offers, even considering shares that they own that could be sold [to the raider] at a premium" (*New York Times*, January 2, 1985).

Some companies are using ESOPs to replace pension plans in whole or in part, because a pension-fund surplus is cash that attracts raiders who plan to use it to redeem "junk bonds" given for stock to take over the company. The $450 million surplus sitting in the Phillips pension fund was one reason that made the company attactive to raiders. Phillips is likely to tap this pension money to pay for ESOP shares for its employees. Other companies are reported doing this before raiders appear.

Employees also have gotten into takeover fights on the side of the raider; the best-known example is union support of the successful effort of Icahn to take over Trans World Airlines. Eight days after addressing a bold, full-page "open letter" to Icahn in the *New York Times*, saying that they would not permit him "to take over our company," TWA's management, which owns little or no TWA stock (while Icahn had at that time acquired over 30 percent), ran to union-busting Frank Lorenzo's Texas Air Lines and begged to be taken over. The Air Lines Pilots Association (ALPA) at TWA and later the International Association of Machinists (IAM) reacted by approaching Icahn for a pretakeover agreement, calling for the employees to get 20 percent of the company's stock, seats on the board, and a guarantee against selling off any parts of the airline or equipment; in return the unions will take a cut in pay and benefits averaging about 20 percent. In the steel industry, the United Steelworkers, in striking Wheeling/Pittsburgh Steel, made common cause with the company's largest and second-largest shareholders against management in opposing a Chapter 11 reorganization plan that would have permitted the company to terminate its contract with the union.

The rail unions are fighting efforts by Norfolk Southern to take over Conrail (85 percent government-owned, 15 percent employee-owned), by joining with management to either preserve government ownership or make it an independent railroad by public stock sale.

Employees' involvement in determining ownership and/or control of companies was all but unheard-of until recently. This phenomenon is in line with the trend for unions to sit on corporation boards, pioneered at Chrysler in 1982; it has led to representation on the boards of 14 companies (not including employee-owned ones). Full partnership "in decisions from the shop floor to the executive levels" is called for in the new GM–UAW contract for the Saturn plant to be built in Tennessee, according to Owen Bieber, UAW president, who calls it "a degree of co-determination never achieved in U.S. collective bargaining." This seems to be the direction in which the wind is blowing.

Referring to use of employee stock ownership to block takeovers, Joseph Schuchert, president of Kelso & Co., an investment banking firm specializing in leveraged buy-outs that use ESOPs from management's side of the street, said, "I think what you're seeing here is a desire of the large companies that want to maintain their independence to develop a new ownership constituency in their employees.

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They are the natural shareholders of the business." This refers, obviously, to management's independence of hostile takeovers.

Is the interim, caretaker period of "no one owning" beginning to come to an end? With a reappearance of ownership with control, will it be that of the employees? If managerial capitalism is only an interlude, what do we call what follows? Employee capitalism? Or will it be minimal, feasible socialism within the context of American conditions? Would it be socialism, given the low level of social awareness of today's employees of corporations, both white- and blue-collar? Or, at least, a threshold stage? If this is to be the American road to socialism, how odd that one of its catalysts should be named T. Boone Pickens! But *so* American! □

POSTSCRIPT • The takeover wave shows no signs of diminishing. It is credited with driving the stock market to historic highs. Growing alarm about its possibly disastrous impact on the economy caused Paul Volcker, chairman of the Federal Reserve System, to have its board curb use of "junk bonds" in takeovers, acting by a 3 to 2 vote in the face of all-out opposition from the Reagan administration, which trumpeted its "free-market" ideology. Volcker's victory might be short-lived, however, since the two board members who voted with him are to be replaced shortly by Reagan appointees. The AFL–CIO joined with the National Association of Manufacturers and other management groups in support of the board's action, with opposition coming mainly from the financial community. Courts, both federal and state, continue to tilt toward managements' right to use "poison pill" and other defenses against takeovers, though a federal court held that nonvoting stock could be issued to block takeovers only with prior approval of stockholders.

Victory in Tug River Valley

In our last issue we ran an article by Nicolaus Mills reporting on the long and bitter miners' strike in southern West Virginia and Kentucky. Here Mills adds a postscript on the results of that strike.—Eds.

Fifteen months after it began, the longest strike ever run by the United Mine Workers (UMW) is over. The end came five days before Christmas when A. T. Massey, the nation's sixth largest producer and second largest exporter of coal, signed a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) agreement in which it effectively acknowledged that it was a common employer at a series of struck mines throughout the Tug River Valley of Kentucky and West Virginia. The agreement put a halt to Massey's strategy of trying to break the UMW by insisting that each of its mines is an independent operation, free to hire union workers without regard for their seniority and pension rights at other Massey mines.

The NLRB settlement is a major victory for the UMW's decision to rely on a selective strike strategy and a $70 million strike fund in its battle with Massey. At this point Massey's obligation to live up to the Bituminous Coal Operators Association agreement that covers an estimated 40 percent of the coal industry remains in dispute. The UMW is convinced that the courts will resolve the issue in its favor and that by sending its men back to work it will gain more than by keeping the strike going. As a result of the NLRB settlement, the UMW's Massey miners have the legal status of "unfair labor practice strikers." So long as there is work available at Massey and they report within 60 days of the end of the strike, they must be rehired unless it can be proved they engaged in illegal strike activity. Were the UMW to keep the strike going beyond 60 days, it would be an economic strike and Massey could call for a decertification election in which the replacements it has hired would be eligible to vote on whether or not they wanted a union.—N.M. □

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Mitchell Cohen

A Holiday Inn of Bourgeois Virtue

Irving Kristol and the Spirit of Capitalism

In a celebrated passage of "The Economic Ethic of World Religions," Max Weber remarked that often, "like switchmen," the "world images" created by ideas have "determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest." In the past decade and a half, the somewhat nebulous group known as the neoconservatives seems to have sought just this role—that of switchmen of the American mind, seeking to change the signals and hence the track for both intellectuals and the country at large. This effort, which began with a pretense of being "nonideological," has at its center the most publicly self-proclaimed neoconservative, Irving Kristol. While the joint introduction he wrote with Daniel Bell for the first issue of the *Public Interest* in 1965 denounced "ideologists" for their "prefabricated interpretations of existing social realities," the introduction to Kristol's recent *Reflections of a Neoconservative* (1983) proclaims, by contrast, that "in the modern world, a nonideological politics is a politics disarmed."

Kristol's writings since the 1960s form an ideological whole, resting on an edifice of claims about the fate of the bourgeois world—an edifice constructed primarily while he was en route from supporting Hubert Humphrey to serving as a Reagan advocate and, in David T. Bazelon's words, the "brigadier general in the Intellectual Supply Corps of the business class." Bell, whose essays parallel Kristol's in some crucial regards, criticized him in the 50th Anniversary issue of *Partisan Review* for retreating "from the idea of a 'prudential politics.' " Bell went so far as to brand contemporary conservatism as incoherent and to chastise neoconservatives for taking the posture of self-righteous ideologues who not only need enemies but frequently sound like "a hunted band . . . huddled together against the 'cultural hegemony' of the liberals and the left." Bell finds no little irony in this since he sees the neoconservatives as the victorious switchmen of the 1970s. Unlike Irving Kristol, Norman Podhoretz, Midge Decter, and company, Bell does notice that the democratic left has not been running America of late.

Kristol's catechism is familiar by now. If we'd only let America be America, if we'd only reject the insidious antibourgeois "adversary culture" promoted in the media by the "new class," the nation could reemerge as something like what was intended by the Founding Fathers. His underlying agenda is to provide American capitalism with a moral incandescence he thinks it fails to generate, to its detriment. While on principle he finds the system's operative precepts more than satisfactory, he knows that any socioeconomic order requires a self-justifying luster, transcendent props in the form of ideology and/or religion, if it is to survive. This is the source of his obsession with the "adversary culture." He would do for those in power what he accuses that "culture" of doing for those he thinks are aspiring to (or are out of) power—that is, supply the intellectual means and confidence to face all challengers. Since Kristol claims that neoconservatism aims to infuse "American bourgeois orthodoxy with a new self-conscious intellectual vigor," it is only proper that his edifice be examined for its intellectual rigor.

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I

Kristol claims a "detached attachment" to bourgeois society, insisting that it provides the foundation for the best of possible worlds, with the emphasis decidedly on possible. Hence, as the title of one of his collections proclaims, he gives but two cheers for capitalism, though they often ring louder than he pretends. Still, his goal has been to distinguish himself from both the old and the new right, and to do so he has reiterated his support for a "conservative welfare state." Underpinning this is an ideological mélange that draws on numerous sources but has its own peculiar consistency. From Leo Strauss comes a concern with "character" and the premodern; from Max Weber comes an emphasis, taking somewhat un-Weberian forms, on the relation between religion and capitalism; from Joseph Schumpeter comes the claim that not economics but culture will be capitalism's undoing; from Lionel Trilling comes the notion that an "adversary culture" promoted, or perpetrated, by a new class will accomplish Schumpeter's prognosis.

All this is seasoned heavily with James Madison and Adam Smith (and subtly, one suspects, with Lord Acton), stirred by a venture into intellectual history according to which the Anglo-Scottish Enlightenment and its link to the American Revolution are Good Things while their French counterparts are Bad. The result is then served *à l'américaine*. Perhaps it was Bell, characterized once by Kristol as the theoretician of neoconservatism's "social democratic wing," who best captured this in *Partisan Review* when he called it "a strange hybrid of 'bourgeois populism,' a mixed metaphor of Aristotelian measure within the burgher's suit of clothes, which by prudence, reflection, and moderation would dissolve the fevers and black humors of political choler."

The fevers are many. Since the '60s Kristol has been obsessed with the delegitimation of American institutions, discerning decadence everywhere—although presumably Ronald Reagan's Era of Patriotic Good Feelings has stemmed the tide. Kristol is preoccupied with "the tendency of democratic republics to depart from . . . their original, animating principles . . ."[1] He often seems to find this process somewhat mysterious, emphasizing the unintended results of human acts (unless, of course, Adam Smith's Invisible Hand works things out). The animating principles of the American republic combine *The Federalist*, classical liberalism, the market, and religion. Madison and friends "*intended* this nation to be capitalist and regarded it as the *only* set of economic arrangements consistent with the liberal democracy they had established."[2]

Consequently, Kristol is at pains to explain that "the bourgeois idea" is embodied in a combination of individual liberty and the pursuit of self-interest tempered by civic virtue and "traditional institutions," especially religion—rather than in either a libertarian version of capitalism or one that espouses the claim famously articulated in Bernard de Mandeville's *The Fable of the Bees* (1714) that the selfish pursuit of private vices yields public benefits.

Religion and capitalism, according to Kristol, are linked in the person of the bourgeois who, far from being a mere hedonist or social Darwinist, upholds values that are in fact "the Judeo-Christian virtues assimilated into capitalist society."[3] This is a somewhat bizarre claim; I, for one, am unclear as to what exactly "Judeo-Christian" virtues are, especially since Kristol goes so far as to assert that the principles underlying the Protestant ethic are not only equally Jewish, but perhaps Confucian, too! Clearly, Kristol pines for a Horatio Alger world in which the businessman is hero and his vocation "*profitable because honorable* and not vice versa."[4]

Whether profit can economically, sociologically, or logically be derived from honor need not concern us—it certainly doesn't concern Kristol. Rather, his aim is to champion "the man who succeeded by diligence, enterprise, sobriety, and all those other virtues Benjamin Franklin catalogued for us, and which we loosely call 'the Protestant ethic.' "[5] The world view of the Founding Fathers, Kristol says, was antiurban. But alas, their provincial America, "which at least paid lip service to, if it did not live by, the traditional republican morality—that America which, whether on the farm or in the suburb or small town, thought it important to preserve the appearance of a life lived according to the prescriptions of an older agrar-

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ian virtue and piety"—has been ingested into urban civilization with all its malcontents and discontents.[6]

Capitalism and the bourgeois ethos, argues Kristol, sought a better life for all, but these aspirations were always tempered by a recognition of human limits. This is one reason why, in his view, one's response to the French and American revolutions, respectively, indicates the true nature of one's politics. Following, very selectively, Hannah Arendt's *On Revolution*, Kristol proclaims the American Revolution a success and the French a failure because the former was strictly political while the latter engaged with "the social question." Indeed, the American Revolution seems to have been just about the only true revolution, because revolution is "a practical exercise in political philosophy, not an existential spasm of the social organism."[7] Ironically, Kristol insists simultaneously on the singularity of the American Revolution as a revolution and on its conservative character in creating a correspondence between political institutions and the preexisting American "way of life."

This is something of a semantic game in which the rebelliousness of revolution is denuded in order to redefine it as an exercise in conserving. A successful revolution, Kristol tells us, is "best accomplished by a people who do not really want it at all, but find themselves reluctantly making it."[8] Now, one does not know where the Russian revolutionaries of February 1917 might fit into this, or if the converse proposition is true, that unsuccessful revolutions are the product of people who do want and/or are compelled to make them. However, in utilizing Arendt's distinction between political and social questions, Kristol banishes from his own account her emphasis on the "pathos of novelty" in revolutions, that is, their character as an *engagement* with freedom, and a participatory, almost joyous, entry into the public sphere. Kristol's selectivity—not illegitimate in and of itself—becomes problematic because of the broader intellectual agenda to which it is tied.

In an argument clearly intended to imply a moral for our day, Kristol makes much of what distinguishes the Anglo-Scottish Enlightenment from that of the French; the former mode of thinking helped engender the victories pursuant to '76 in America, while the latter abetted the disasters of '89 and after in France. The Anglo-Scottish Enlightenment refers to an array of 17th- and especially 18th-century thinkers including, among others, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, David Hume, Adam Smith, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, Bernard de Mandeville, Adam Ferguson, and Francis Hutcheson. As a group, they constituted an "intellectual agent" of and a response to the birth of "bourgeois capitalist Britain." And since he has defined revolution to be an exercise in political philosophy, Kristol has no problem characterizing the Anglo-Scottish Enlightenment as a "revolutionary movement" that "like all successful revolutions . . . did not try to impose a set of preconceived ideals on a recalcitrant reality." (Of course, if we follow this logic, the "shot heard 'round the world" at Concord was fired by a philosopher, not an embattled farmer, and Jefferson was not a revolutionary since he proclaimed inalienable rights—which are clearly preconceived ideals—in the Declaration of Independence.)

The Anglo-Scottish Enlightenment did not "merely" overthrow an *ancien régime* "but created a new and viable one," for it was composed of cautious men, skeptical, concerned with individual liberty, always cognizant of the role of self-interest in human affairs. True, they were a differentiated lot and Kristol, as noted, insists on separating what Mandeville's world view and the egotistical atomized man of Thomas Hobbes represent from Smith, Shaftesbury, and Hutcheson, for whom self-interest has "natural and self-correcting limits."[9] In the end, however, what Kristol wishes to impress on us is that "When one speaks of the 'spirit of capitalism,' one is bound to have in mind the Anglo-Scottish Enlightenment, rather than the French."[10]

Kristol's point here is really this: when the French revolutionaries ran amok, murdering royalty and storming the barricades of tradition, they traversed grounds made fertile for turmoil by Enlightenment rationalists naive enough to seek universal regeneration. The *ancien régime* was culpable for nothing, by his account; excess was wrought entirely by the revolutionaries and their intellectual predeces-

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sors, who were apparently all of a kind. The *philosophes*, it seems, composed the 18th century's "New Class"—"alienated," and with "all the wit, verve, boldness of imagination, and blithe irresponsibility" often displayed by "such a class" of salon intellectuals.[11] Ah, if the Bourbons and their backers had but funded their own switchmen at a French Ancien Institute, the Enlightenment might have taken to other tracks. But, instead, the *philosophes* saw progress as the total undermining of the old order, in contrast to the Anglo-Scottish "revolutionaries," who looked at their world and saw that it was good, as evidenced by "the rise of commerce, the gradual 'refinement' of manners and morals, the increase in knowledge." In consequence, Kristol informs us, it is hardly surprising that "French rationalism was so contemptuous of traditional French institutions, whereas Anglo-Scottish rationalism was so respectful of British institutions."[12]

This entire account rests on a historical sleight of hand. The *philosophes* wrote in *pre*revolutionary France while the Anglo-Scots, by and large, wrote in the context of *post*revolutionary Britain. The English 17th century, designated as important but then passed over by Kristol, was full of bloody civil war, upheaval of tradition, and regicide, those things he abhors when they occur across the channel in the following century. In speaking of the Anglo-Scots with eyes turned to the New World, he skews the reference points of their thought. His query doesn't extend to comparing the worlds that the Anglo-Scots—apparently forebears of the neoconservatives—and the *philosophes*—ancestors of New Class liberals, leftists, and modernists—respectively held in esteem and contempt.

The precise nature of Anglo-Scottish influence on America's revolutionary epoch is debated by historians, but not the fact that such men as Smith and Hume came to their bearings in the post-1688 Britain of constitutional monarchy and parliamentary supremacy. Kristol, it seems, has an interest in ignoring this. He is especially concerned to counterpose the attitudes of the two Enlightenments toward religion, but he says nothing about the relations of Anglicanism and the First Estate to their respective societies. True, both were pillars of established order. But needn't one ask, what order?

Kristol's presentation of the French Enlightenment, despite a disclaimer, is a homogenized caricature. One wonders whether Voltaire, perhaps its most representative if not most renowned figure, exemplifies "blithe irresponsibility" according to Kristol. After all, the author of *Candide*, for much of his career, advocated France's transformation through an alliance of the monarchy and the bourgeoisie, was enraptured by the London Stock Exchange (as his *Lettres philosophiques* attest), and raised the banner of tolerance, free speech, and the rule of law in *ancien-régime* France.

In short, Kristol's adventures in intellectual history demonstrate a blithe, and shoddy, disregard of context. More than this, his couplings—Anglo-Scottish Enlightenment/American Revolution and French Enlightenment/French Revolution—are a "prefabricated interpretation," a Kristolized example of what Herbert Butterfield once criticized as the "Whig Interpretation of History." As Butterfield noted,

> Our assumptions do not matter if we are conscious that they are assumptions, but the most fallacious thing in the world is to organise our historical knowledge upon an assumption without realising what we are doing, and then to make inferences from that organisation and claim that these are the voice of history.[13]

But then, what if the assumptions are recognized? It is common, and hardly culpable, for political combatants to harness potent symbols in a nation's political culture for their partisan goals. Both left and right do so, though this may lead, obviously, to popular myths and historical misrepresentation. Such an expropriation of the American founding for neoconservatism is precisely Kristol's purpose. He does so by touching themes long debated by scholars about the formative influences of American political culture.

In very simplified form, the question is this: Is America primarily a product of a Lockean world view that emphasizes the natural rights of property and individualism, or can one legitimately point to a tradition of republicanism that stresses "civic virtue" and is rooted in a

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Renaissance humanism that was mediated by English republican and dissenting traditions in the 17th and 18th centuries, en route to the New World?

These categories are, of course, by no means logically or historically exclusive of each other but rather reflect different emphases. Kristol wants to harness the republican notion of virtue—which in its classical form celebrated public life and man as *zoon politikon* (a political animal). But, simultaneously, he wants to give it a bourgeois guise, thereby countering the claim that the politics and political implications of self-interest were foremost in the minds of the Founding Fathers—and, by extension, are in those of Irving Kristol and his friends. The most recent rejoinder in the scholarly dispute, John P. Diggins's *The Lost Soul of American Politics* (1984), ought to be of little comfort to Kristol, since Diggins forcefully criticizes the misconstruing of classical republican and Scottish ideas (particularly "virtue") in their American context and argues (just as forcefully) that the framers of the American republic by and large *rejected* the notion that their political creation could be founded on "virtue," as opposed to the realities of interest and power.

The details of the scholarly debate need not preoccupy us here,[14] but what is essential is that Kristol would divest the tradition of political republicanism of any legitimate radical impulse. Such a maneuver is at least debatable in its American and is manifestly false in the European context. (It is striking that in two of Kristol's essays preoccupied with the American political heritage and published at the time of the American bicentennial—"The American Revolution as a Successful Revolution" [see Note 7] and "Adam Smith and the Spirit of Capitalism" [see Note 9]—mention of a certain Thomas Jefferson appears but once and then only in passing.) In any event, Kristol seeks to link the heritage and the future of republicanism to specifically bourgeois virtues, his fear being of a democratic republicanism that might extend beyond the political realm. Indeed, there has long been a tradition of socialism that sees in economic democracy the obvious fulfillment and concretization of a democratic republicanism that, in its bourgeois form, is viewed as incomplete owing to its reliance on formal rights and abstract individualism. For Eugene V. Debs—whom Kristol may choose to see as un-American—American socialism was the force that would rescue American republicanism, as Nick Salvatore stresses in his recent biography of him. Debs was at least as American as Jean Jaurès, who saw his own socialist movement as the heir to the French revolutionary tradition, was French. A socialism speaking American would undoubtedly cause neoconservative nightmares.

In the end, Kristol's edifice rests on a consistent mangling of the relation between political ideas and history. This is where it takes him: Once upon a time, mostly, it seems, in the late 18th century, there was a liberal-capitalist America, suffused by a religiously tempered and provincial republican virtue, heir to the Spirit of '76 and the Anglo-Scottish Enlightenment, yielding the ethos of a bourgeois civilization that was politically articulated in the Constitution and *The Federalist*. But this civilization is now subverted, perhaps by impulses within it, and the democratic republic is far adrift from its original animating principles. Hence the malaise of modern times; hence the need to carefully consider the tracks before us.

II

What exactly has gone awry? In terms that would please a Marxist, Kristol states that capitalism's distinguishing feature is that it makes commerce "the dynamic force which defines and shapes the civilization."[15] He qualifies this, however, by claiming that this force originally, somehow, did not define the fundamentals of the civilization, by which he means "matters of belief about good conduct" (that is, moral and religious beliefs). But then the problem begins: "in our lifetime" the true liberal tradition self-destructed as it dissociated itself "from the Judeo-Christian tradition which was the source of those beliefs" about proper human behavior.[16] In other words, Kristol assumes that the force defining a civilization can somehow be disconnected from the civilization's fundamental beliefs about good and bad conduct. The logic employed is reminiscent of that of the father, in Sholom Asch's play *God*

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of Vengeance, who runs a brothel on his first floor, while seeking to retain his daughter's chastity on the second.

Kristol wants the morals of capitalism, a system defined by buying and selling, to be those of a Cotton Mather preaching *The Federalist*, and then finds himself slapped by the back of the Invisible Hand when pious Publius turns out to be *homo œconomicus*. Unlike romantic anticapitalists who pined for *Gemeinschaft* in the face of *Gesellschaft*, he wants them both at the same time. Kristol, as Michael Walzer once put it, "stands with one foot firmly planted in the market while with the other he salutes the fading values of an organic society." Unlike neo-Marxists who see the consumerist culture of the West as inherently bourgeois—as the obvious oak to grow from the capitalist acorn—Kristol wishes to absolve capitalism of the consequences of what he himself calls its dynamic force.

For Kristol the bourgeois ethic, via capitalism, achieves unprecedented political and economic success, only to have its world undermined from within by an adversary culture produced by intellectuals. These intellectuals are filled with *ressentiment* toward an essentially unheroic society that is "prosaic, not only in form but in essence" and compels them, because of the market, to consider the tastes of the common man. An "amiable philistinism" was, in Kristol's view, "inherent in bourgeois society," and this inevitably upsets artists and writers.[17] Thus a kind of elitism, restive and often bohemian, is engendered, which is hostile to bourgeois life, counterposes itself to the popular (apparently wholesome, traditional, republican) majoritarian culture, and is especially represented in the Antichrist of capitalism, cultural modernism. Kristol, here playing the populist while going into one of his characteristic lapses in regard to history, tells us that this sort of situation is virtually unprecedented in the annals of humankind; after all, Greek tragedies were performed before the Athenian citizenry, Dante was read aloud in Venetian squares, and Shakespeare's audience included both the more and the less sophisticated.[18]

This concern with the culture of the common person is extraordinary in someone who espouses strict meritocracy and once declared, "I do not like equality. I do not like it in sports, in the arts, or in economics. I just don't like it in the world."[19] His argument, not surprisingly, ignores who, historically, had access to what culture and in which conditions. Classic Athens, for example, had twice as many slaves as citizens. We owe culture, as Walter Benjamin once noted, not only to writers and artists, but to "the anonymous drudgery of their contemporaries. There is no cultural document that is not at the same time a record of barbarism." But Kristol hardly notices the toils of the many, and why should he, since the type of existence they lead creates those social explosions he disdains as mere "existential spasms." Indeed, all this is consistent with his advocacy of a "conservative welfare state," which he favors in order to remove certain issues from political debate. A nation, he writes, "whose politics revolves around such issues as day-care centers or school lunches or the 'proper' cost of false teeth is a nation whose politics is squalid, mean-spirited, debasing."[20] This virtuous observation is undoubtedly true . . . as long as you can afford the dentist and your children aren't offered ketchup as a vegetable. And as long as poverty and scarcity are regarded as "merely" social, and not high-minded political, issues.

In defending "common" culture against the scourge of modernist elitists, Kristol is directing us toward some broader points he would make. One is that these elitists can contemplate the "higher things in life" owing to the affluence that capitalism creates. However, the culturally "new" projected itself, he says, just as capitalism was undermining tradition, and as mass education, especially in the post-World War II era, spread modernism's intellectual modes and legitimacy.[21] All this unhinged bourgeois society from its moorings and brought forth what Kristol calls a "not easily defined" class that carries aloft an equalitarian, antibourgeois banner.

In Kristol's writings, "classes" exist primarily when they are useful to him in making a point. He has strongly implied that the very concept of class is misplaced in the United States. Indeed, "if we go to a Holiday Inn and look at the people—their clothes, the food they are eating, their cars—it is impossible to determine their social status, or their income, or

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what jobs they have."[22] This example of sociological innuendo, in which the irrelevance of class is demonstrated by a singularly peculiar representative sample of the American people, has not kept Kristol from elsewhere locating a "vaguely" describable but decidedly power-hungry new "indispensable class for our society"—"a goodly proportion of those college educated people whose skills and vocations proliferate in a 'post-industrial society.' " [23]

The emergence of such a nonpropertied, educated, and vital stratum—its ranks range from scientists and city planners to educators and public-health doctors—has been discussed and probed exhaustively by writers on the left and the right to discern its political and sociological significance. At times Kristol appears to be battling for the soul of this "class"—the 1984 Yuppy vote for Reagan may demonstrate a certain neoconservative success on this score—while at other times he seems to imagine this New Class as something of a left-liberal modernist Golem, arisen and marching, dominant in the media, advocating equalitarianism, undermining the meritocracy that made America great, and influencing liberal politicians so that the country may become an all-encompassing welfare state, demanding and needing the New Class's services.

Thus, by Kristol's account, assorted evil forces—unleashed by capitalism's very triumphs—have undermined bourgeois virtue and its traditionalist props. In their stead, a "self-centered hedonism" becomes the standard of happiness. Rather than work and discipline, acquisitiveness and appetite rule the day. The attitude Kristol describes, one imagines, was at least partly exemplified by a young member of the New Class—Norman Podhoretz—who declared in the mid-1960s that, having "made it," he realized that money, fame, and power are Good Things, for it is "better to be rich than poor . . . better to give orders than take them . . . better to be recognized than to be anonymous."[24]

III

Kristol wants to believe that capitalism is no longer truly "bourgeois" insofar as it jettisons the theological temper he thinks helped engender it. Consequently he much bemoans a "Great Inversion" of the postwar era whereby the assumption that "liberal" governments ought to intervene in morality—but not in economics—was reversed. (Where the New Deal fits into this historical schema, one just doesn't know.) Kristol's nostrum is not, heaven forbid, the transformation of capitalism; rather, it is less regulation of business and a good dose of that old-time religion (mostly, it would seem, for others). For "the deeper one explores into the self, without any transcendental frame of reference, the clearer it becomes that nothing is there." However, Kristol's real problem is one of *human* transcendental frames of reference. Hence his fear of modernism, which threatens to fill our empty selves with adversary culture, as opposed to, and instead of, Truth and Faith. Indeed, "If nothingness is the ultimate reality, those somethings called books, or poems, or paintings, or music are mere evasions of truth rather than expressions of it." [25] What Kristol does not and cannot consider is that those books, poems, and paintings—and the expressions of angst and dislocation in them—may be human efforts to struggle with the nothingness of a social system that deifies commerce and profit, and whose god permeates all aspects of contemporary life—so that authentic human meaning can best be found in revolt against it.

Kristol wants to "turn the clock back" and, as Peter Steinfels has suggested, create a Bourgeois Reformation, since in his view America's alternatives are either Reformed Bourgeois Capitalism or nihilism. (Again, one imagines that this Reformation actually began with the presidency of Ronald Reagan, underwhelming Luther, though he might be.) "It is the ethos of capitalism that is in gross disrepair," writes Kristol, "not the economics of capitalism—which is, indeed, its saving grace. But salvation through this grace alone will not suffice."[26]

Kristol's use of the religious motif is particularly revealing. In his depiction of bourgeois life, religion is an indispensable bond of human harmony, a bond that classical liberalism, with its emphasis on rational access to truth, tears apart. Hence (again) the need for a Reformation since, as he puts it, bourgeois society has lived for a century and a half on the moral capital traditional religion and morality had

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supplied. But now, it seems, the principal has dissolved, as legitimation has passed from the heavens to culture.

Even if one grants Max Weber's renowned thesis that the Protestant (or the Protestant-Jewish-Confucian) ethic was a catalyst of capitalism, Kristol's claims are untenable. In the first place, that ethic's premises remain those of a theology, not of an ideology of capitalism. Hence inasmuch as neoconservatives intrinsically link, as they are wont to do, the Protestant ethic with a social culture of bourgeois meritocracy, they ignore the Augustinian foundation of Lutheranism and Calvinism in the notion of *un*merited grace. That is, it is by God's hand, not by human deed, that the individual is saved. Good acts, and behavior—diligence, sobriety—may be signs of salvation, but in themselves merit nothing; abstinence is such a sign, not a capitalist virtue. Kristol can't be faulted for his dismay at the hedonism and consumerism rife in contemporary culture, only for his acrobatics in explaining them and his attempt to mystify their sources.

One suspects that, given his cavalier attitude toward social suffering—and all who did not make it from 1930s City College socialism to the *Wall Street Journal*—what truly summarizes Kristol's politics is to be found in his statement that "In every society, the overwhelming majority of people lead lives of considerable frustration, and if society is to endure it needs to be able to rely on a goodly measure of stoical resignation."[27] Therefore, he concludes, give 'em the consolations of religion because they'll never consume philosophy. This posture—presented by a man who once urged comprehending utopianism so as to preserve "the integrity of reality" and who now poses as a bourgeois *populist*—discloses an enormous cynicism behind his pretenses, especially his religious ones. Indeed, *who* will have to be stoic? The readers of Kristol's columns in the *Wall Street Journal* or the funders of the American Enterprise Institute? And *which* reality is to be preserved?

The sociopolitical logic employed in Kristol's exploitation of religion is, in fact, the reverse of that in his discussion of revolution. It is fine to use a nonpolitical social force such as religion for conservative political purposes and bolstering a status quo; but when poverty or inequality, in short, "the social question," makes its revolutionary intrusion, then woe to political virtue! Then the social organism is having, not hunger pains, but an "existential spasm." Kristol has written that

> The results of the political process and of the exercise of individual freedom—the distribution of power, privilege, and property—must also be seen as in some profound sense expressive of the values that govern the lives of individuals. An idea of self-government, if it is to be viable, must encompass both the private and the public sectors."[28]

Exactly so. But then the "merely social" does matter, doesn't it? It surely must share center stage with politics in the public sphere. And one should then notice the implications for policy issues—such as affirmative action.

Kristol's real concern is not the individual's existential confrontation with nothingness but rather the maintenance of order by giving the masses a good—dare we say it?—opiate, in the general form of neonostalgia. It is noteworthy that, in making his various assertions, Kristol never confronts the actual arguments made by the critics of religion's social and political roles in the last two centuries. For instance, the point of Marx's famous "opium of the people" comment was that religion *does* try to grapple with existential questions. In a world of human suffering, of poverty and meaningless toil, religion was "the soul of soul-less conditions"; hence the yearning for a narcotic that, at the same time, happens to be a useful means of social control. The question for Marx was whether the religious response to such "soul-less conditions" was valid; one hardly has to be a Marxist to see this is a subject that Kristol never addresses.

In the end, there is something bizarre in the way Kristol and like-minded neoconservatives portray modernism as the Antichrist of bourgeois civilization. Was it really modernism, even if spread wider through mass education, that became the source of legitimation and delegitimation in the West, undermining order, tradition, religion, and authority? We know that Kristol, lump in throat, admits that perhaps something intrinsic to capitalism created this situation. But that is just it; the famous

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Hidden God, *Deus Absconditus*, did not abscond in the face of modernism. He was chased from the bourgeois Temple by *its owners*, the money changers, the believers in the Hidden Hand. And not Baudelaire, Dada, or modernist sensibility in general (or even Yippies later on) were the source of disruption, but rather factors such as nationalism and science (not to mention capitalism itself). Scientific discovery, not surrealism, assaulted the pretenses of religion to universally valid knowledge; and if there is a spiritual force that succeeded religious sensibility, it is the sanctified myth of that collective ego known as the nation. It is by the yardstick of this god—in whose ethos the neoconservatives believe—not modernism and experimental poetry that morality, loyalty, and thus individual virtue came to be judged. The "sacred" did not shrink, as Bell once put it. It was reinvented as the dollar, the nation, and scientific rationality. It seems, however, that all this is beyond the purview of the America Irving Kristol inhabits—or would like to inhabit—a classless Holiday Inn of bourgeois virtue.

Postscript

A SPECTER stalks the neoconservatives, and they have summoned their powers to exorcise it. It is the distinctive specter of Jeremy Bentham, the father of 19th-century English utilitarian philosophy, who insisted that something is good if it augments the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people; bad if to the contrary. And, more important, it is the specter of him for whom pain and pleasure are humanity's "sovereign masters," the calculable determinants of what is called happiness. It is ultimately from a Benthamite *raison d'être* that Kristol would shield capitalism. Apparently, when the track before bourgeois civilization forked, with one way leading to hedonism and the other to virtue, Jeremy or his like was at the switch.

Kristol's former coeditor Daniel Bell has bemoaned that "to its own detriment" capitalism adopted a Benthamite self-justification grounded on individual self-interest and utilitarian calculation. This, he says, and undoubtedly Kristol concurs, was a "weak moral argument."[29] "Had I the courage of my friend Heinrich Heine," Marx once wrote, "I should call Mr. Jeremy Bentham a genius in the way of bourgeois stupidity." For the author of *Capital*, Bentham's moral vision and the values accompanying a world of fetishized commodities and consumerism—in which buying and selling and the conversion of ends, including human beings, into means—are the essence of the bourgeois world view. For neoconservatives, they represent a bourgeois world that has gone off on the wrong track. Hence the real question: Who has the correct interpretation of Jeremy Bentham's relation to "the bourgeois idea" and the spirit of capitalism? Is he the genius of their stupidity, or the Mr. Hyde of their Dr. Jekyll?

Notes

[1] Irving Kristol, "Preface" to *On the Democratic Idea in America*—hereafter *Democratic Idea* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. vii.

[2] ____, "Corporate Capitalism in America," in *Two Cheers for Capitalism*—hereafter *Two Cheers* (New York: Mentor, 1978), p. 3.

[3] ____, "The Disaffection from Capitalism," in Michael Novak, ed., *Capitalism and Socialism: A Theological Inquiry* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1979), pp. 25–26.

[4] Irving Kristol, "Horatio Alger and Profits," in *Two Cheers*.

[5] "Corporate Capitalism in America," pp. 17–18.

[6] ____, "Urban Civilization and Its Discontents," in *Democratic Idea*, p. 11.

[7] ____, "The American Revolution as a Successful Revolution," in *Reflections of a Neoconservative*—hereafter *Reflections* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), p. 84.

[8] Ibid., p. 85.

[9] Irving Kristol, "Adam Smith and the Spirit of Capitalism," in *Reflections*, p. 155.

[10] Ibid., p. 146.

[11] Ibid., p. 150.

[12] Ibid., pp. 151–52.

[13] Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1965), pp. 23–24.

[14] The contemporary debate is at least three decades old. Louis Hartz's *The Liberal Tradition in America* (1955) emphasized Locke's bequeathal. Bernard Bai-

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lyn's *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (1967) argued that American colonists saw "a comprehensive conspiracy against liberty throughout the English-speaking world" and were especially influenced by a "distinctive ideological strain" of "left" opposition to Walpole in London, an opposition that was heir to 17th-century English republicanism. J. G. A. Pocock's *The Machiavellian Moment* (1975) argued that the revival of republicanism during the Florentine Renaissance (and thus the revival of notions of civic virtue rooted in the conceptions of man as a political animal, in contrast to the Christian whose kingdom is not of this world) eventually traveled to America, via 17th- and 18th-century English republicanism. Among other things, Diggins's book seeks to undermine Pocock's thesis and also various claims about the influence of Scottish ideas in the work of Gary Wills—*Inventing America* (1978) and *Explaining America* (1981).

[15] "The Disaffection from Capitalism," p. 16.

[16] Ibid, p. 23.

[17] Irving Kristol, " 'When Virtue Loses All Her Loveliness,' " in *Two Cheers*, p. 242.

[18] ____, "The Adversary Culture of Intellectuals," in *Reflections*, p. 37.

[19] ____, "The Spiritual Roots of Capitalism and Socialism," Novak, ed., *Capitalism and Socialism*, p. 14.

[20] ____, "Reforming the Welfare State," in *Two Cheers*, pp. 232–33.

[21] "The Adversary Culture of Intellectuals," p. 38.

[22] "The Disaffection from Capitalism," p. 25.

[23] See "Business and the 'New Class,' " p. 25, and "Corporate Capitalism in America," pp. 14–16, both in *Two Cheers*.

[24] Norman Podhoretz, *Making It* (New York: Random House, 1967), p. xi.

[25] "The Adversary Culture of Intellectuals," pp. 39–40.

[26] Ibid., p. 42.

[27] Irving Kristol, "Capitalism, Socialism, and Nihilism," in *Two Cheers*, p. 59.

[28] " 'When Virtue Loses All Her Loveliness,' " pp. 250–51.

[29] Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), pp. xii–xiii, see note. □

TICKETS

(Continued from p. 192)

in one's bowels and dictating the beat of one's heart. And if one does not know this, one risks becoming an imitation—and, therefore, a continuation—of principles one imagines oneself to despise.

If *The Price of the Ticket* is to be the summation of Baldwin's career, then we must be grateful for the wisdom contained in its early essays and take as a warning the latter ones which are, all too often, "an imitation" and "a continuation of principles" Baldwin taught us to despise. □

**The Price of the Ticket: Collected Nonfiction 1948–1985* by James Baldwin. New York: St. Martin's/Marek. 690 pp. $29.95.

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Stanley Engelstein

A Week in Warsaw

Aside from the request at Passport Control that I remove my cap to confirm that I was the bald man in the picture, entering Warsaw was uneventful. I was waved through after having had to buy zlotys at the official rate of 147 to the dollar and declare the amount of dollars I was bringing in. This laxity was a relief in that I was carrying books and letters that might have raised questions, but also a disappointment in that my concealments of encoded names, addresses, and telephone numbers were not put to the test.

The cab driver, a friendly young man, lit up a cigarette and offered me one. I answered "nie palic," and he laughed gently. The "No Smoking" sign on the Polish airline on which I had flown in from Paris was my first experience of the way the law of contradiction is disregarded in Poland. Just as in Poland one can be free and not free at the same time, so it is possible to be smoking and not smoking at the same time. On the airplane smoking and nonsmoking sections are divided by a center aisle: left for smoking, right for nonsmoking. Smokers smoke their cigarettes, nonsmokers smoke the smokers' smoke.

The meter for the fifteen-minute drive from the airport to the Europejska Hotel ran to about 300 zlotys. Testing dollar power, I offered the driver one dollar, which cut my fare in half at the official rate and more than doubled it at the unofficial rate. Taking it with a thank you, he earned in fifteen minutes 25 percent more than a woman worker in a Lodz textile plant and two-thirds of what a law professor in Warsaw University earns in a day. When I asked a law professor I was to meet later how she managed to live on 20,000 zlotys a month (about thirty dollars at the unofficial rate) she replied that she had a brother in Chicago.

I had come from Paris for the Helsinki Watch Committee to observe a Solidarity-organized week of protest against political imprisonment, November 3-10, 1985. In my two-and-a-half days in Paris and week in Warsaw and Lodz, I had conversations with Poles in exile, Solidarity leaders, members of the underground Helsinki Committee, other aboveground and not-so-aboveground oppositionists, law professors, and attorneys who defend political prisoners. In some of these talks I was joined by representatives of the Lawyers' Committee for International Human Rights.

PROTEST WEEK. In Poland today there are about 400 political prisoners. The plan for Political Prisoners' Week was to have a Mass in a different church each night culminating in a mass at Father Popieluszko's church on Sunday, November 10. Bishops were to speak at two of the Masses. There was also to be an exhibition of graphic arts and dramatic performances. A letter of protest against political imprisonment was to be signed by 200 prominent Polish intellectuals and sent to the U.N.

A Solidarity leader told me they had considered but rejected setting up picket lines and demonstrations. This was to be a protest, not a confrontation. As he said with a smile, the point is to free political prisoners, not generate new ones.

The two Lawyers' Committee lawyers and I attended the Mass at St. Clements church on Sunday night, November 3. The church is in a working-class quarter and over 2,000 people occupied all the seats and standing room in the large,

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bare interior. Most were between the ages of twenty and fifty. You didn't have to know Polish to feel the power of the priest's thunder. Our Polish friends, in snippets of simultaneous translation, said he was protesting against imprisonment for political beliefs and stressed that it was belief in God that can truly withstand political oppression. After the fiery sermon, the people in the church raised their hands in the two-finger victory salute and started to sing a Polish national song. All this time, up front and visible to all, two young people dressed in a Polish national costume held aloft a Solidarity banner with its blazing red logo.

At the proper time during the Mass, as liturgical music filled the church, a priest and an assistant threaded their way through the aisles dispensing the Communion wafer. Then the young people holding the Solidarity banner followed the same path through the crowd as the music continued to fill the church. It was as if these two young Poles were performing the sacerdotal function of a political communion, perhaps the conversion of a militant trade union movement into a ritual of the Mass.

Since the church is the only legal and independent institution accepted by the people, it may have been simply prudent for illegal Solidarity to mount the protest under its protection. Yet it troubled some activists I spoke to later that Solidarity might be paying too high a price in loss of autonomy vis-à-vis the church for preserving its autonomy vis-à-vis the regime.

II. The State of Repression

THE GENERAL RESPONSE by such important oppositional figures as Jan Jósef Lipski, Janusz Onyszkiewicz, Bronislaw Geremek, Zbigniew Romaszewski, and others to questions about government repression was that things were no better but not much worse than the previous year. Repressive laws continuing martial law by legislative means after its nominal ending on July 22, 1983, still were being selectively enforced.

According to those laws, especially articles 282 and 282A, "disrupting public order and provoking disturbances," organizing and directing "protest activities" could lead to sentences of up to three years. These laws give almost unlimited authority to police and security forces to protect "state security and public order." It was under these articles that Michnik, Lis, and Frasyniuk were imprisoned after a trial in June 1985 in which defense lawyers could not defend and defendants could not speak.

So far, however, there have been no wholesale arrests of oppositionists. A strict enforcement of the laws would have meant the regime had decided upon Stalinist "solutions" and would have had to put up concentration camps for the lawbreakers. The government, as Geremek put it, was pragmatic, not ideological. Though there were 400 political prisoners and that was 400 too many, he said, it was still only 400 in a society where tens of thousands of people were breaking the law.

More recent legislation of May 1985 was a source of real concern to the opposition. One law provided for accelerated procedures for many crimes, except for the most serious ones. Where before the police could detain a person without charges for up to 48 hours (and sometimes do detain the same person again after his release at the 47th hour), the new law provided for arrest, trial, sentence, and imprisonment *within* 48 hours. While this law was designed primarily to expedite proceedings against common criminals, 70 percent of the political prisoners, according to Solidarity people, have been processed by accelerated procedures. This prevents the person arrested from getting his own attorney. The court assigns an available hack for the charade of a defense.

The legal profession has a low status in Poland; judges are poorly paid, many are women, and they are not independent of the government. However, lawyers who defend political prisoners play an important role in the resistance. There is respect for legal norms even though the laws are so vague that almost anything can be done "legally." Government repression can follow the law because the law has legalized the repression. (Except from time to time when it doesn't, as in the trial of Michnik, Lis, and Frasyniuk, where the state violated its own norms.)

Though this "lawfulness" codifies injustice, it is still useful to the opposition. Onyszkiewicz pointed out that it was better now than in the Stalinist period in Poland precisely because of a general adherence to legal norms. In the Stalinist period, when the party was in full control, the laws were fairly liberal. Resistance had to fight arbitrary, "lawless" oppression, which meant direct political confrontations. Today, with the decline of the party, the police have the task of maintaining order by repressive laws. But since legal forms are up-

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held, it is possible to fight back by legal means, although this will now be more difficult with the accelerated procedures.

Another piece of ominous legislation of May 1985 was a law empowering the Minister of Higher Education to select rectors, vice-rectors, and deans, thereby ending a long tradition of university self-government. Under the new law a rector can fire a faculty member without hearing or appeal. Previously, discipline of a faculty member could be appealed to faculty committees. The independence of universities, which had been important centers of free thought in Poland, is now threatened.

As of November 10, there had been little enforcement of this law, but the two law professors we spoke to were concerned that enforcement would begin in the near future, primarily against middle-rank and little-known faculty. (When we asked one professor what he would do if fired, he said he might drive a taxi and take up legal defense activities. In any case, he added, "We don't make enough to live on as professors.") The professor's fears were realized sooner than he could have expected. On November 30 the *New York Times* reported that "The Polish authorities have begun a nationwide purge of political opponents in universities and colleges by removing more than 20 senior scholars from influential administrative posts, opposition sources said today.... Some university sources have spoken of the possible removal of several hundred staff members."

When I asked Onyszkiewicz why the government allowed him, a Solidarity spokesman, to stay on as a professor, he replied that he was too well known for them to dismiss him. International protest after the dismissal of Geremek earlier that year had made the government more cautious. However, a December 14 report in the *New York Times* indicated that Onyszkiewicz "was now under threat of dismissal for his views."

President Jaruzelski seems intent on telling the party at home and the West in general that he is in full control. He demonstrated his strength in the party last November when he fired from his government "hard liner" Olszowski and demoted "liberal" Rakowski. He exchanged his general's uniform and the post of prime minister for a blue suit and the presidency to normalize the appearance of the regime. He is clamping down on the centers of free thought in the university so as to assure both East and West that there will be no turmoil in Poland to disturb the peace of Europe. And he is announcing that, with a technocrat as prime minister, Poland's economic problems are ready for the fix for which only some few billion dollars of credits are required. The visits of Willy Brandt and François Mitterrand in December show that the changes of cast and costume have met with some success.

III. The Underground

IN POLAND THERE IS FREEDOM of conversation but not freedom of expression. It was surprising how freely activists talked in apartments that were presumed to be bugged or in hotel lobbies. When I entered Geremek's studio, his first remark was that the room was a public place and though we could say anything we wanted to, we should not name names. Our meeting with Jan Jósef Lipski took place in the lobby of the Europejska Hotel. Five of us, three Americans, Lipski, and an interpreter, sat huddled around a coffee table. It would have been hard to be more conspicuous. About an hour later a short, stocky man walked over to our table. The conversation stopped. He spoke to Lipski. Ah, I thought, surveillance at last! But not quite. The man worked for the hotel and was asking whether he could clear the ash tray. Lipski and the interpreter were chain smoking. To be sure, Lipski and Geremek are relatively safe because of their international stature, but lesser known activists were equally uninhibited in talking with us.

Talk is open, but public criticism of the regime is a crime. If you are caught with one piece of underground literature, you are a reader and safe (unless the government wants you specifically); if you have two copies, you are a distributor, guilty of the crime of "disrupting public order." While conversations could take place more or less prudently above ground, it was only in the underground—that extraordinary parallel society in Poland—that the publication and distribution of opposition ideas could take place.

By chance I was able to spend about seven hours in conversation with the man who writes under the name David Warshawsky, one of a five-man committee that puts out a leading underground paper, the *Warsaw KOS* (Committee for Social Defense). From him and others, a picture of this underground network emerged.

The social basis of the underground is still that part of the working class which made up the legal Solidarity movement. I asked Onyszkiewicz why

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Solidarity, though always pressing for a dialogue with the regime, refused to cooperate with the new trade unions which were theoretically independent, at least on economic matters. He replied that even assuming an element of genuine independence in these new unions, Solidarity would lose its credibility within its own trade union base if it cooperated. To risk that support for an elusive, probably illusory, legal independent trade union would be to fall into a government trap.

There are secret Solidarity trade union branches of between one-half and one million members who pay 1 percent of their salary to the organization. A Temporary Coordinating Committee (TKK) coordinates activities. Factory newsletters appear regularly; the underground press is distributed, and materials necessary to print and distribute the literature are "organized." The *Tygodnik Mazowsze* is the Solidarity underground weekly which everyone in Poland who wants to know what is going on must read.

Apart from *TM*, hundreds of underground publications appear with some regularity. Such a vast outpouring requires an extensive printing and distribution system. In addition to underground presses, government presses are often used secretively with the help of sympathetic workers. Hundreds of cells of five to ten people, one person in a cell knowing only one person in another, constitute a small army of distributors. Tens of thousands of people are involved in getting materials, stencils, paper, ink. A network of aboveground and not-so-aboveground people provide safe houses. To symbolize its legitimacy, the underground prints postage stamps and mints coins which are sold to raise money. Batches of stamps are sometimes left mischievously at post offices to remind the public of the alternative society.

So extensive a network means that the government has lost its monopoly of information. This alone, according to Onyszkiewicz, indicates that Poland cannot be called a totalitarian society and is perhaps best described as a dictatorship. When he was asked how he would describe the underground politically, he said it could be divided into two categories: those who are for radical goals and moderate means and those who are for radical means and moderate goals. The goals of the former are no less than "independence" from Russia and freedom in Poland. (Michnik has called them the "fundamentalists" whose "radical thinking is peculiarly vulnerable to paper designs and to emotions that block sight of reality.") They are a small minority with no ideas about how to change life in Poland. The other group shuns programs and schemes for an ideal society and concentrates on telling the truth about this one, while trying to build autonomous cooperative movements and a free culture within the society.

When I asked Warshawsky about the program of his influential *Warsaw KOS*, he replied that it was simply to tell the truth about life in Poland and abroad. He rejects organization on principle and believes that people should try to carry on their lives in the freedom of small autonomous groups. After *Warsaw KOS* appeared for the first time, 40 other publications called *KOS* sprouted throughout Poland. Despite the common name, each group is completely independent. When I suggested that this was more an antipolitics than a politics, he answered that he had a profound distrust of parties, organizations, and centralized leadership. It was enough for him that he could continue exposing lies and oppression.

Warsaw KOS is distinctive for its consistent secular criticism of the Church and of American intervention in Central and South America. This has caused Warshawsky no end of grief in an underground that views the United States as the only force that might deliver Poland from the oppression of Russia. Lipski, for example, is for a continued arms buildup by the U.S. to force Russia to compete and to weaken its economy to the point where it would have to relax its grip on Eastern Europe. When *KOS* published an article attacking the U.S. invasion of Grenada, underground printers refused to print it. Underground leaders had to persuade them that freedom of speech should prevail over workers' control.

When I asked Geremek what political perspective Solidarity could have in Poland today, he replied that it must keep pressing for a dialogue with the regime to begin the democratization of public life. No sooner did I remind him of Leszek Kolakowski's image that this was like trying to fry snowballs than he shrugged and said: "But what else can we do?" Whether such a dialogue will ever take place, he added, will depend on the international situation, but at the same time no solution in Poland can take place without the support of the Poles themselves. Solidarity has left a hunger for democracy in many younger Poles, and this remains a potent factor in the country's political life.

After an interview with a prominent attorney

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who had defended political activists since the time of Gomulka, I asked the interpreter what personal life was like in Warsaw. Her face lit up and she said: "Life here is exciting. Everything is black and white. We know who the enemy is and we have our work to do." When I asked a young woman activist about political possibilities in Poland, she answered that her work was not political but moral. Still another oppositionist, a literary critic who had lost his job and was now full time in the underground, said that the task was not to overthrow this government—which was impossible—but to learn to live within it. Political pessimism, however realistic, is irrelevant to the imperative of continued resistance and the need to tell the truth.

IV. Departure

AFTER CHECKING IN, passengers line up to pass inspection and make a currency declaration. The line moved very slowly as bags were spot-checked. In front of me was a Polish woman who had about 5,000 zlotys which she had not declared. The inspector was chiding her severely. He then left.

Behind me were three young Americans who had just come from two weeks in a small town near Cracow. They were members of an evangelical church who had been distributing special milk to diabetic children. This was their second trip to Poland. The Polish people were wonderful, they said, but boy, did they hate the Russians. One of them told me of a trip they had made to Auschwitz. He hadn't known exactly what to expect and what he saw had made him sick. "Would you believe that there was a mountain of human hair on display?"

It made me reflect on conversations I had in Warsaw about the movie *Shoah*, one-and-one-half hours of which (the Polish parts) had just been shown on television. Viewers were outraged that Poland was represented by primitive peasants in the most backward areas of the country. The government's motive in showing only the "anti-Polish" segments of the film, it was agreed, was to provide the people with another example of the way life in Poland is distorted by the West. In France, where all nine-and-one-half hours of the film had been running for many months, some Polish exiles thought that Lanzmann's bias marred the film but did not significantly diminish its importance as history or art.

The sticky issue of Polish anti-Semitism inevitably came up as part of the talk about *Shoah*. Geremek thought that Polish anti-Semitism, while no longer a political problem, remained a moral problem. Solidarity, he said, had been an important force in combating political anti-Semitism. When asked whether anti-Semitism was endemic in Polish culture, Onyszkiewicz replied that he thought it was but that it was decreasing rapidly. On another aspect of *Shoah*, one sophisticated activist said that people are true to their history and this in part explains why the Jews allowed themselves to be destroyed. I did not ask whether her theory explained why three million Poles were annihilated by the Nazis.

Meanwhile, the clerk returned with forms, which the woman signed. She will get her zlotys back when she shows the forms on her return. I could not understand why the government should be concerned about a zloty drain. Was this another one of those appearance/reality gaps that abound in Poland?

As I took my seat on the Swissair plane, I reflected on the paradoxes of Polish history; that from 1795 to 1918 Poles were without a state but thought themselves to be a nation; that for a brief historical interlude between the wars they were a nation with a state and that today they are a state without the support of a nation. □

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Lucy Komisar

Jacek Kurón on the Present Situation

Jacek Kurón, 51, is a founder of KOR (Workers' Defense Committee) and adviser to the leadership of Solidarity. He has spent nearly half of the last twenty years in Polish prisons. What follows is an abbreviated transcript of comments made by Kurón in a conversation with journalist Lucy Komisar at his apartment in Warsaw on August 24, 1985.

There's no return to the point before Solidarity; that can never occur. The idea of ten-year cycles is not correct. There are two important differences: first, the group in power is different from any other that has held power in Poland. And generally the whole government establishment is different. They may be the same people, but their consciousness is different.

The Gierek [Edward Gierek, former prime minister,] team was born as the result of workers' opposition to the Gomulka government, which had used force to make them quiet. That was not efficient, and opposition began to grow. Gierek came up with a completely new idea—to talk with the workers who were rioting. And this dialogue made them quiet. It looked like an agreement between society and the power structure. Nobody signed it, but it had the appearance of a formal agreement.

Gomulka did a similar thing in 1956. None of these agreements were signed or formal, but in society's consciousness they seemed like agreements. The sense of Gierek's agreement was that if workers would be quiet, not take to rioting, he would give them a good life, a comfortable life.

The operative scheme of Gierek's team was that in relations with society you can't use violence. You can manipulate society, but you can't use force, the police. Gierek's team did abide by the agreement. They improved conditions; they didn't use violence. They would manipulate, but avoid violence. Till his last days Gierek thought he could go to the workers and talk to them, because he had lived up to the agreement. That was the main reason Solidarity could start, not the only reason, but a basic one.

Now look at the Jaruzelski team. They know that manipulating society is impossible. Talking with society—the people—won't accomplish anything. This team never tried to reach any agreement with the people. They just wanted to win; there was no place for any compromise.

This is the experience of this Jaruzelski team and the whole establishment. Their experience has taught them that violence in politics is very efficient. I am not saying that they are right or wrong, only that that is how they operate.

Another difference is that society is organized outside the power establishment and official channels of organization. This is a completely new point in any communist regime. From the viewpoint of the government, manipulation is impossible.

Gierek could play games with manipulation, because people on the other side were not organized. The Jaruzelski team can provide some more liberal regulations for self-government in enterprises; but if they really do that, the whole Solidarity movement will use this opening. Social resistance, Solidarity, can find its way through any hole in legislation. The government knows that.

Another important difference is that the state of economic affairs is extremely bad. This crisis which we live under is the result of forty years of completely ruinous economics, forty years of ruining the country.

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IT'S NOT ONLY ECONOMICS. In industry, no more than 60 percent of capacity in machines and equipment is used. Buildings, roads, railroads haven't been renovated for forty years. New construction can't cover these losses. There is devastation of water resources. From the viewpoint of water resources, we are in last place among European countries with a moderate climate. It is a catastrophe. In Silesia you have towns where water is brought by trucks. The soil is devastated; clean air and raw material resources are coming to an end.

We know that Polish coal will be all used up in thirty years. So we know this is a ruined country which has to be rebuilt. Rebuilding the country is possible in just one situation: when people work hard and get paid little. Good work and low wages. This is very difficult to achieve except under conditions where they have the feeling they are building their own society, their own state.

Only a very democratic society can do that. We hoped it could be done until December 13, 1981. On that day this hope was killed. It is not possible to go back to December 12 to avoid catastrophe in the future.

Now as to the hope of a new eruption: there is no hope, because the state of affairs in the government is such that they will answer with violence. Of course, anything can happen in the future. But to the degree you can predict anything, you can say that the Jaruzelski team will answer any attempt at rebellion with violence. There are two possibilities. Either they will pacify the riot with lots of violence, or the "neighbors" will come.

The opposition can't have a strategy. They don't have a strategy, because the governing power is not sensitive to pressure. This accounts for today's quiet; people are not ready to press the establishment. If we start a demonstration, people will fight the police all over Poland. The outcome? Nothing. . . .

Opposition, however, is having an influence on the national consciousness. This is very important, but it can't do anything in a political sense. It can't and doesn't want to use anything other than peaceful means.

THE INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIOLOGY of the Polish Academy of Science did a survey of public opinion. Twenty-five percent of the respondents answered as supporters of the government; 25 percent answered as opponents; the rest, 50 percent, answered in ways that can't be classified, or they didn't answer.

The first 25 percent are government employees and retired people. The 25 percent against are probably young people up to thirty, workers in big industry, and intellectuals. Solidarity is strongest at big industrial plants and academic institutions.

The 50 percent are probably "against" but are afraid to answer and so are ready to go along. If you look at the election statistics, more than 25 percent abstain, so some part of this 50 percent doesn't go to vote either. Some probably read illegal publications, but don't do anything. They are probably tired of fighting and have no hope, because there is a broad feeling that the system will endure and there's no way of changing it.

There was also a survey among students. To the question, "Is there any hope Poland will recover from the crisis?" only 13 percent said yes. That was a general question, not "in one or two years, etc." This lack of any hope leads people to desperation. That's the reason why there is no explosion in Poland.

This 25 percent is not in favor of "eruption"; they know too much. But among this 50 percent which can't say yes or no, the feeling of desperation is growing. That's a paradox, but the activity of underground Solidarity causes the outburst to be less and less possible. They know what the result can be. They're organized, they're not alone, they discuss the possibilities among themselves. They're also leaders of this society. If anything happens, they will lead the situation. If there's an eruptive situation, people look at the few men considered to be the leaders. If they don't say yes, people won't go. This nonexplosive situation can last, but for how long, nobody can say.

The idea that an explosion will start because of Solidarity is the government's idea and is contrary to the real situation. When the situation was worsening in Poland, the government resorted to repression. That was a mistake, because they cannot possibly destroy Solidarity.

There's a bigger and bigger gap between the activists of Solidarity and the general society. It's not a case of hostility between activists and the rest of society, but they are active while others have stopped being active and become quieter.

People look to Solidarity with less and less hope. Before, they hoped Solidarity could lead them out of the crisis; now they don't have that hope. □

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James Q. Wilson

On Crime and the Liberals

Elliott Currie criticizes conservatives, of which he takes me to be a leading representative, for their views on crime ("Crime and the Conservatives," *Dissent*, Fall 1985). Since I have not yet seen Mr. Currie's book, I do not know what his views are, but some of them can, perhaps, be inferred from how he criticizes mine. If my inferences are correct, and if Mr. Currie is to be taken as a representative of liberal or socialist thought, then the liberal or socialist position on crime has some serious problems of its own.

He makes essentially four arguments. First, that conservatives refuse to deal seriously with the root causes of crime; second, that conservatives fail to explain why the rate of crime, especially violent crime, should be so much higher in the United States than in other nations; third, that the favorite conservative remedy for crime—more imprisonment—has been tried and found wanting; and fourth, that cultural explanations for the growth of crime in America are false and, worse, misleading, for they justify inaction (presumably inaction with respect to economic and other material matters).

When I published the first edition of *Thinking About Crime* in 1973, I wanted, among other things, to persuade readers that *both* the liberal *and* the conservative positions of the time were in error. The view of many liberals (perhaps best expressed in the writing of Ramsey Clark) was that the cure for crime lay in an assault on its root causes, which were assumed, on the basis of the shakiest evidence, to lie in material deprivation; failing that, criminals should be rehabilitated. The argument of many conservatives (exemplified by the campaign rhetoric of Richard Nixon) was that the proper approach to crime was to take the "handcuffs" off the police (by repealing court-ordered exclusionary rules), restore the death penalty, increase the severity of penalties for crimes, and appoint a "get-tough" attorney general.

I believed that both position were wrong. It was not hard to show the weaknesses in the conservative position. The attorney general, and the federal government as a whole, had little to do with crime control, which was essentially a local responsibility. Within those localities, the conventional policies—increased police patrol, hiring more detectives, loosening the restrictions on police—seemed to have little measurable or lasting influence on crime rates. There were clues that new forms of police deployment, such as reintegrating the police into the community and developing specialized squads that would target high-rate offenders, might make a difference, but the evidence was still fragmentary. (It has since become much stronger.) There was little evidence that the severity of penalties (as opposed to their certainty) had an effect on crime rates. Since much in the conservative position was based on the assumption that there was a technological quick fix for crime, studies showing that the technologies did not work as hoped were sufficient to rebut the assumption.

The liberal position was a more difficult issue. It was based less on faith in technology than on what I took to be a false view of human nature. That view was that man was wholly the product of his environment and that by making marginal alterations in that environment one could alter human behavior in predictable and desirable ways. I did not believe there was any evidence to support such a view; moreover, even if altering the social context of crime would reduce criminality, it would take decades—perhaps generations—of effort for such efforts to have a significant effect. I worried that the pursuit of a distant hope was tantamount to condemning people to be victims of crimes, some of which could be avoided by different, less ambitious policies. Moreover, I suspected that some advocates of reducing crime by eliminating its causes knew full well that such methods would not work in a timely manner and were not in the least troubled by that fact, for their real agenda was not to reduce

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crime but to remake society. This suspicion was heightened by the number of liberals who, when asked what they proposed to do about street crime, would immediately change the subject and rail against corporate crime, as if it was ITT, not the neighborhood mugger, who was terrorizing the people—especially the poor people—in our cities.

It was in this context that I began my book with the sentence Mr. Currie attacks: "I have yet to see a root cause or to encounter a government program that has successfully attacked it, at least with respect to those social problems that arise out of human volition rather than technological malfunction." I grant you that was a rather testy way of phrasing the matter (I said as much at the time), but bear in mind what Mr. Currie forgets—it was true, literally true. The Great Society had been put in place almost ten years earlier, and all that we had learned so far was that federal aid to education was not improving school achievement, Project Head Start did not seem to be working, community-action programs were not reducing crime, job-training programs were not reducing hard-core unemployment, and drug-treatment programs were having, at best, an uncertain effect on heroin addiction.

Efforts to rehabilitate criminals had been under way for decades, and the clear lesson from the research was that we had not yet learned of any programs that made much of a difference. The inference I drew from this was also true: the search for ways to cure the root causes, given the knowledge we had at the time, reflected a "cast of mind that inevitably detracts attention from those few things that government can do reasonably well and draws attention toward those many things it cannot do at all."

At the time, some liberals protested that the Great Society programs were not a fair test of what could be accomplished by social melioration. If only more money had been spent, if only it had been spent more wisely, if only the spending had gone on longer. . . . What sustained such protests, in absence of any evidence of any gains? Hope, I suppose, or ideology, or both. I was not opposed to the hope, and said as much ("reducing poverty and breaking up the ghettoes are desirable policies in their own right, whatever their effects on crime"). What I did oppose were untested hopes, and the ideology that sustained them: with social policies as with police tactics, I wanted experiments conducted that would find out what works. I'm certain Mr. Currie views me as an ideologue, loving to punish and hating to help, but he is wrong; I am, or try to be, a pragmatist. Given that everybody wants less crime, how do we find out what policies will make a significant difference at a reasonable cost? "Above all," I wrote, "we can try to learn more about what works, and in the process abandon our ideological preconceptions about what *ought* to work." I can assure Mr. Currie that this message was as strongly resisted among certain elements in the police world as it was among the enthusiasts of social spending.

GIVEN WHAT WE KNEW, I argued that society should try to manage conduct by altering the rewards and penalties consequent on that conduct. Punishing crime was no more illiberal than rewarding virtue, and punishing criminals was no less likely to work than providing jobs to would-be criminals. Mr. Currie takes me to task for embracing, without evidence, a theory of human nature that assumes that people choose a course of action based on its likely consequences, consequences evaluated in terms of learned rules of conduct that moderate their natural desire for self-gratification. In *Thinking About Crime* I did make that assumption but not, I think, unreasonably; not only does it accord with everyday experience and the teachings of psychology, it also is consistent with such evidence as we have on the responsiveness of criminal behavior to the probability of it being punished.

The studies of deterrence that were available in the mid-1970s, almost without exception, supported such a theory. We now know more than we knew then. We know in particular that some of the older aggregate statistical studies of deterrence were flawed, but we also know that newer statistical studies have corrected many of these flaws while coming to essentially the same conclusions and that experimental evidence (such as the Minneapolis spouse-assault project) gives dramatic proof of the capacity of even relatively minor sanctions to reduce criminality. I review these studies at length in the revised edition of *Thinking About Crime* (Basic Books, 1983); I will not repeat the review here.

Moreover, Richard J. Herrnstein and I have discussed at length the development of criminality among young persons in *Crime and Human Nature* (Simon & Schuster, 1985). The evidence from biology, child development, the sociology of the family, and research on schooling shows quite clearly how early childhood experiences, interacting with individual predispositions, affect the extent to which people take into account the distant consequences of their actions and the feelings and interests of others. One must be impressed with the vast accumulation of evidence pointing to the im-

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portance of these very early experiences—experiences occurring long before the child can have much contact with the labor market—in producing the high-rate offender. *Crime and Human Nature* amply supports the view, earlier suggested in *Thinking About Crime*, that the root causes of crime among the career criminals tend to be found in intimate settings that policy-makers will find difficult to reach, much less to change.

Difficult, but not impossible. Of late, some experimental evidence has been gathered indicating that parent-training programs can improve the ability of parents to cope with difficult children in ways that improve school performance and reduce misconduct and that certain kinds of preschool education programs can produce significant reductions in later delinquency. These experimental results, unavailable five years ago, offer real glimmers of hope and deserve the most careful exploration. I am now engaged, with others, in summarizing the more promising leads and trying to persuade policy-makers to invest substantially in replicating and enlarging these experiments. Many questions remain unanswered: Can the gains produced by a small number of gifted therapists and educators be reproduced by a larger number of (inevitably) less gifted or motivated workers? Will the gains observed in certain groups of youngsters be found in other kinds as well?

More leads may emerge in the future. We are beginning to learn how schools that achieve an orderly environment for learning differ from those that can barely cope with riotous misconduct. We may learn whether the more effective schools produce lasting or only temporary reductions in delinquency. Efforts to reduce crime by giving jobs and job-training to ex-convicts and delinquent high-school dropouts have not yet been very successful, but it is conceivable that by focusing attention on younger children who have not yet found crime rewarding, more can be achieved.

In the meantime, justice alone, to say nothing of a desire to reduce crime, requires that the guilty be punished. Wicked people *do* exist, and a just society cannot treat them with the leniency advocated by the dwindling but still ardent band of prison opponents. Of course, prison is not the proper sentence for every offender. We are now beginning to gain experience—again, unavailable five years ago—with alternatives to prison such as community service, house arrest, and intensive probation, experience that may make it possible to satisfy society's legitimate demand for justice and protection and at the same time minimize the human and financial costs of full-time incarceration, at least for nonviolent, relatively low-rate offenders. But "alternatives to prison" has been many years a slogan around which all right-thinking progressives can rally rather than a tested policy that prudent people can endorse. We still await substantial empirical evidence that a given alternative will work as well as (if not better than) jails or prisons for a given kind of offender. But if the matter is approached as a question of strategy rather than ideology, that evidence may well be forthcoming and I, for one, would welcome it.

LET ME NOW TURN to the specific issues Mr. Currie has raised. Why does the United States have so much higher a rate of violent crime than other industrialized democracies? I do not know. I hope Mr. Currie will enlighten me. In *Crime and Human Nature* Herrnstein and I summarize such evidence as we can find on the matter, but it is inconclusive, especially with respect to such dramatic exceptions as Japan. It probably has to do with the complex, poorly understood interaction among individual temperaments, familial processes, criminal opportunities, law-enforcement practices, and national culture—which all vary, to some degree, from one society to another. There are some hypotheses worth considering, and a few scraps of evidence, but not much else.

But the existence of different levels of crime across nations (or cities, or states, or individuals) does not, as Mr. Currie seems to think, disprove any particular theory of human nature or discredit any particular public policy. To use national (or city, or state) differences in crime rates as a test of some theory, one must fully state the theory and then hold constant those variables that are not of interest while examining the independent effect on crime of the variable that is of interest. This is so elementary a methodological point that I am embarrassed to mention it, but Mr. Currie seems not to understand it. To him, the fact that incarceration rates and crime rates differ, without obvious pattern, across nations is ipso facto evidence that there can be no connection between the two.

Imagine what a reader's reaction would be if I asserted that Anglos are less criminal than Hispanics because crime rates are always higher wherever Hispanics are especially numerous. The reader would immediately, indignantly, and rightly demand that I take into account differences in earnings, employment rates, age structures, degrees of urbanization, and police practices, among other things, before entertaining such a conclusion. Or suppose I were to state that unemployment rates had no effect on crime because England, Italy, and

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the United States all had comparable unemployment rates but very different crime rates. Again, the reader would want to know what effect unemployment had after controlling on the age structure, ethnic composition, labor-force participation rates, and so on, of the various nations.

BUT WE NEED NOT LET THE MATTER REST on what some readers may (erroneously) regard as a methodological quibble. We can consult Mr. Currie's own evidence, the cross-national study by Kenneth I. Wolpin of Yale. Wolpin is one of the very few scholars who have compared crime rates across nations in the context of a well-defined theory of criminal behavior. (Dane Archer and Rosemary Gartner have also made useful international comparisons of homicide rates.) Mr. Currie claims that Professor Wolpin's data show that California is much more likely to send a robber to prison than England or Japan, yet California has a robbery rate that is many multiples of England's or Japan's. Mr. Currie's inference—that greater punitiveness is associated with higher crime rates—is wrong. The data from Professor Wolpin he cites refer only to the probability of going to prison if convicted. The true risk of prison, given the commission of a crime, is the product of three probabilities—the chances of the crime being cleared (solved) by the police, the chances of the arrested criminal being convicted, and the chances of the convicted criminal being imprisoned. This combined conditional probability is easily calculated from the data in Professor Wolpin's article. The odds of a given robbery resulting in the imprisonment of the robber are as follows: California, .040; England, 0.161; Japan, .233. In short, a given robbery is *four times* as likely to result in incarceration in England, and nearly *six times* as likely to result in incarceration in Japan, as in California.

Far from thinking that sanctions have no effect on crime, Professor Wolpin concludes that they have a very large effect. In his words: "It is apparent that increased crime control either through greater certainty of capture or conviction given capture, or through increased severity of punishment given conviction, is related to the reduced level of robberies." He also observes that the more youthful the population and the higher the unemployment rate, the greater the criminality. Professor Wolpin properly and carefully notes the limitations of his findings and the large effect that is played by culture or other hard-to-measure factors. Nonetheless, his findings lead him to precisely the opposite conclusion than the one Mr. Currie draws from them.

FINALLY, MR. CURRIE DISMISSES my view that cultural factors play a large role in determining the major increases and decreases in crime in American history; presumably, he would also dismiss the role of culture in explaining differences in crime rates between, say, Japan and the United States. Since virtually every serious historian of 19th-century crime rates in this country (I refer to Eric Monkkonen, Roger Lane, and Ted Gurr) believes that culture plays some significant role, and since virtually every serious observer of crime in Japan (I think of Ezra Vogel and David Bayley) assigns a very large role to culture, I am at a loss to understand why Mr. Currie rejects the argument.

One reason may be that he thinks a cultural argument is inherently conservative. He refers to the "stock theme of insidious moral decline" that is invoked to explain "nearly everything the contemporary conservative finds wrong with American society." Later, he backs up a bit and admits that "the weakening of long-standing norms of racial inequality" probably had "an important influence." Of course, he cannot prove that, any more than I (or Monkonnen, or Lane, or Gurr, or Bayley, or Vogel) can prove that other cultural factors may also be at work. Proving, by the standards of modern social science, the power of any cultural factor is notoriously difficult. But if Mr. Currie wishes to advance his favorite cultural explanation, is it wrong for me to advance others? And if neither kind can be proved, is it irrelevant that I try to show that it is consistent with a large body of historical information? And if not, why dismiss plausible, but inherently unprovable, cultural arguments with a sneer? I do not reject the possibility that changing racial norms or unleashed black rage may contribute to changing crime rates; indeed, Herrnstein and

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PUBLIC SPACE

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In the Summer 1986
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I devote a large part of one chapter to considering just such a possibility. I certainly do not label that theory the "stock theme of insidious moral rage" used to explain "nearly everything the contemporary liberal finds wrong with American society."

I look forward to Mr. Currie's book because I want to know, given his impatience (and sleight of hand) with any arguments based on cultural or criminal justice, how he proposes to explain and cope with criminality. I hope in that book he uses evidence in a more sensible way than he uses it here and that he addresses, seriously, the very limited choices a free society faces in trying to deal with crime. Otherwise, he will once again make liberalism (if, in fact, he is a liberal) what it was in the mid-1960s—a victim of crime in the streets. □

Elliott Currie Replies

I was happy to learn that James Q. Wilson planned a response to my critique of his (and others') work in the Fall 1985 *Dissent*. I was less happy upon actually reading it. I'd hoped that Wilson's response might help stimulate a healthy debate on the issues I raised. But to my considerable disappointment I think it mainly sidesteps them. That's too bad, because a more straightforward confrontation might have advanced the discussion of crime in America considerably.

Wilson's response muddies the waters in two ways. First, he largely skirts the *specific* criticisms I made of the conservative view in the original article—notably its emphasis on judicial leniency as a central cause of America's high crime rate and the similar, but broader, assault on the laxity or "permissiveness" of American culture and institutions generally. Second, his long, more general critique of the liberal and left position on crime—past and present—misrepresents the views of his opponents, overstates the evidence against those views, and exaggerates the evidence in support of his own. The liberal position is reduced to an easily deflated caricature, a strategy that makes Wilson's own views seem by comparison most sophisticated indeed; but in the process, most of the really tough issues about crime and what we might do about it get lost.

Let's begin with the first problem—Wilson's treatment of those issues of culture and criminal-justice policy that my article most directly addressed. I took issue with conservative criminologists for their insistence that the leniency or "tolerance" or "permissiveness" of American culture in general and American justice in particular was to blame for our disastrous rates of criminal violence. I argued that as an explanation for American crime rates this simply didn't stand up to the evidence. Our criminal justice system, while not overwhelmingly efficient in putting away dangerous offenders, was nevertheless unusually punitive with those it was able to catch and convict—in comparison with other countries which still managed to maintain far lower rates of crime. Moreover, we had become much *more* punitive in recent years without witnessing a corresponding reduction in crime. Similarly, we were, again by comparison with many other advanced industrial countries, extraordinarily punitive in many of our cultural values and institutional practices—as evidenced by such things as our continued support for the death penalty and for corporal punishment of the young.

Wilson in turn takes me to task on these issues, but in ways that convince me, if I needed convincing, that my original criticisms were on target. Consider first the argument about judicial leniency. He simply avoids my central point—that our courts are not notably lenient with most serious convicted offenders—and instead shifts the terrain altogether, suggesting that I believe that "sanctions have no effect on crime." But that's not what I said, nor what I believe. "It certainly isn't unreasonable," I wrote, "to believe that perceptions of 'cost' have some weight in determining individuals' behavior." What I did say was that such abstractions, by themselves, are of little use in helping us understand variations in crime rates, or in devising specific policies that might realistically reduce crime. In practice, I argued, the conservative argument has usually been more specific—that the courts are soft on offenders, and—at least by implication—that they are softer here than elsewhere, softer now than in the past; hence getting "tougher" with offenders in the courts would substantially reduce crime. I argued that none of this was in fact true; nothing in Wilson's response convinces me otherwise.

All of the data we have, in fact, support the contention that we are more punitive with offenders who have been caught and convicted than most

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other developed countries. Wilson accuses me of a little sleight of hand in my use of data from a study by Kenneth Wolpin to bolster my point. Well, the sleight of hand is there, all right; but I'm afraid it's his, not mine. Let's look closely at the original argument. I used Wolpin's data to show that, even *before* our massive "get-tough" efforts of the 1970s and 1980s, the United States incarcerated more of those robbers we had managed to catch and convict than did the British or the Japanese. I made that point in response to a direct quote from a recent article by Wilson that asserted the contrary—that we do *not* "imprison a higher fraction of those arrested, prosecuted, and convicted than do other nations." I pointed out that Wilson had based this argument wholly on an earlier study by Wolpin which, as Wolpin himself later acknowledged, failed to count Americans sentenced to local jails. When they are added in, the picture changes altogether, as Wolpin's later research shows. We do indeed put more convicted robbers behind bars than other countries. Hence Wilson's earlier statement was simply wrong—wrong even for the period before the "get-tough" 1970s, even more so now.

WILSON, HOWEVER, SEEMS unable to acknowledge this. Instead, he argues that since the chances of being caught and convicted are higher in Japan (according to the Wolpin study), the overall chances of incarceration are higher there. That's true, but it's also not the issue; I pointed it out myself, after all, in the same article. The question is what we make of this for purposes of intelligent social policy—or for understanding the causes of crime. To me, what this evidence tells us is that blaming judicial leniency for America's crime rate is easy but fruitless, since the problem lies primarily in the difficulty of *catching* criminals—not in our failure to get "tough" with them once caught. And since no one has ever shown that it's "leniency" that keeps us from catching criminals at the rate the Japanese do, we need to look elsewhere both to understand why our crime rates are so high and to develop realistic ways of doing something about them. Wilson has done some creditable writing on the police, and I suspect he understands this dilemma as well as I do. Why doesn't he simply acknowledge that his original statement was incorrect?

Something similar happens in his objection to my treatment of his argument about the links between crime and American culture. Nowhere does he respond to the substance of my criticism—that blaming America's crime rate on "tolerance" or an "ethos of self-expression" simply doesn't fit the evidence, either from our own experience or that of other countries. I argued that by international standards we are not a particularly tolerant society; nor are the social strata from which most violent criminals come noted for their encouragement of tolerance or self-expression. Wilson sidesteps those points, instead chiding me for rejecting cultural explanations of crime altogether. But did I really do that? On the contrary, I *commended* the conservatives for raising cultural issues. I said that "with all its rhetorical excesses," the conservative argument about the links between crime and culture "raises important questions"—ones that "liberal criminology has sometimes sidestepped." My beef with Wilson's specific argument wasn't that it was "cultural," but that it was wrong. Once again, since he makes no effort to challenge—or even acknowledge—the specifics of my argument, I see no reason to modify that judgment.

I *did* say that explanations of crime that detach cultural from other social and economic forces are likely to be misleading; and I did say that they are also often used to justify a certain ideological passivity, an antipathy toward attacking the roots of crime through conscious social action. I still think so. Wilson's comments on Japan in his response simply add to that conviction. In his list of the things that might influence Japan's low crime rate, he includes just one—police practices—that has anything to do with public policy. But the Japanese do many things differently than we do when it comes to organizing their economic and social lives. And much evidence suggests that some of them may help us understand the difference between their crime rates and ours. Are we really to believe that such things as an effective employment policy—to take just the most obvious example—or a narrower spread of economic inequality don't even rate a place on the list of *possible* factors that might help explain those differences?

MUCH OF THE REST OF Wilson's response amounts to a wide-ranging defense of the whole gamut of his views on crime; it would take a book to respond thoroughly to all the points he raises. Since I've already done that, let me just note a few of the more obvious and distressing ways in which his remarks misrepresent or oversimplify the evidence.

1. There were many things wrong with the liberal position on crime in the 1960s, as I've argued at some length in *Confronting Crime*. But Wilson consistently caricatures that position and exaggerates the evidence against it. The caricature begins with the statement that the liberal view rested on the (hardly credible) belief that "man was wholly

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the product of his environment." I don't know anyone who believed that, and I know a great many liberal criminologists; indeed, I *was* one, and I certainly never believed it. What liberals—and those to their left—*did* believe was that certain aspects of the socioeconomic environment had a profound effect on the crime rate—extremes of economic and racial inequality, blocked opportunities to achieve the economic and social rewards others could expect, intermittent or inadequate employment. Wilson says that no evidence supports this view, but I'm afraid that tells us more about his own lack of familiarity with the criminological literature of the time than it does about the actual state of the evidence. For there was considerable evidence even by the late 1960s (much of it summarized in such compendia as the report of the Task Force on Violent Crimes of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence)—and there is much more today. On the other hand, there was not then, nor is there now, a shred of evidence to support Wilson's sweeping claim that "altering the social context of crime" would take decades or "generations" to have an effect, if it would have any at all. How would he know? What studies have tested and supported that astonishing proposition?

Wilson is on stronger ground in arguing that the early literature on the effects of social programs on crime wasn't very encouraging (it is far more so today). But his insistence that this disproved his opponents' position is unconvincing. Wilson argues that all that sustained the liberal (and left) position in the face of the "failure" of some Great Society programs was "hope or ideology or both." But what really sustained it was simple common sense. For the objection that the programs weren't adequate to the problems was basically correct. Take employment policy. Liberals and socialists had long argued, with considerable evidence, that poor jobs bred crime. They also knew that the United States was unique among the advanced industrial societies in having developed no effective or comprehensive postwar employment policy. They knew, too, that this default was especially critical because of the massive migration of jobless people to the cities following the mechanization of agriculture and the consequent elimination of rural livelihoods. This understanding called for serious intervention in the labor market in the form of substantial training and job-creation efforts. But that isn't what we got. Indeed, that sort of effort was deliberately shot down in Congress three times after World War II—in the Employment Act of 1946, the manpower legislation of the 1960s, and the revised Humphrey-Hawkins bill of the mid-'70s. Instead, Congress created a welter of scattered programs that by anyone's accounting—and especially by comparison with what went on in many other countries—were grudging and minimalist responses to a problem that demanded massive intervention. Wilson implies that developing an effective employment policy is one of those things "government" "cannot do at all"; but other governments *did*. The problem in America was not that government *could* not, but that it *would* not, take on the task.

2. Wilson similarly misrepresents the strength of the evidence on deterrence, in order to support the uncontroversial—but also unhelpful—platitude that people "often choose a course of action based on its likely consequences." First, the early evidence—as the National Academy of Sciences pointed out in its exhaustive 1978 review of the issue—simply wasn't strong enough or clear enough to be of much use in informing social policy. It is true that most criminologists believed, in general, in the existence of some deterrent effect of punishment. But how well it worked, compared to what alternatives, for which offenders, and how to better accomplish it within the confines of the criminal justice system—the early evidence couldn't say. Today we know more. But what we know is not especially encouraging.

It seems clear that in the case of certain specific crimes—like domestic violence, the example Wilson uses—tougher sanctions against offenders can make a difference. But that's because sanctions of *any* kind are now so rarely enforced; the same may hold for drunken driving, another crime for which the evidence of a deterrent effect of getting tough is fairly persuasive. But this doesn't apply to other violent crimes where the probability of punishment is already high, such as murder or armed robbery. The record of efforts to get still "tougher" on such crimes, especially through mandatory sentences, is not compelling. Wilson and I would probably agree that a tougher approach to wife-batterers would be a good thing; had he in fact read my book, he would have known that. But he ducks the central issue: that years of getting "tougher" on most other serious violent crimes have brought disappointing results, not necessarily because people don't respond to punishment but because devising realistic ways to increase the *certainty* of punishment for most violent crimes has proven difficult indeed. (Wilson also chooses to ignore the evidence—dramatically accumulating in recent years—that the deterrent effect backfires for some offenders, that the experience of incarceration makes them *worse*

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—a good liberal argument that turns out to have been correct.)

3. Wilson argues that the root causes of crime lie in "intimate settings"—notably early childhood experiences—that are inherently "difficult to reach, much less to change," through social policy. He has been advancing this argument for many years, and I confess I still don't know what to make of it. I tend to agree that, especially when it comes to serious violent crime, much of what goes wrong goes wrong at an early age. What I cannot fathom is why Wilson seems unable to comprehend that what goes on in the intimate settings of early childhood is profoundly influenced by forces *outside* those settings—forces which are indeed often amenable to conscious intervention. In my book I call this the "fallacy of autonomy"—the belief that what goes on inside the family can be separated from what goes on outside it. Consider Wilson's curious example: since these early experiences happen "long before the child can have much contact with the labor market," the labor market is irrelevant to understanding the child's early experiences! But can Wilson really believe that what happens to *parents* in the labor market has nothing to do with how they bring up their children, or the quality of the resources they're able to bring to that task.

Wilson suggests that I must regard him as one who "loves to punish and hates to help." He's wrong. I do not know Professor Wilson, have never met him, and have no idea what his personal feelings are on these matters. I have no doubt they're much more humane than that. However, he's certainly no "pragmatist," as he claims, but an ardent and influential advocate of a view of crime that rests on certain important political assumptions—particularly the common conservative insistence on the limits of "government." Wilson is surely as entitled to these views as I am to mine, but it isn't helpful—or fair—to declare oneself above the political fray while dismissing one's opponents uniformly as ideologues. Wilson's writings have in fact been among the most important intellectual underpinnings of an approach to crime that has stressed incarceration at the expense of more constructive or preventive social action. That choice is not pragmatic, but political. Moreover, it is a choice whose results have been meager and disappointing in the very terms Wilson claims to care most about: the risks of victimization by crime. Those who cling to this strategy in the face of the mounting evidence that it has been a costly failure typically claim—as Wilson does—to be on the side of crime's victims. But their often slipshod and cavalier rejection of more constructive alternatives actually condemns hundreds of thousands of Americans to brutalization and fear every year. If conservatives wish to defend that strategy with any credibility in the future, they'll have to do a much better job than Wilson has here. □

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Josephine Hendin

Sexual Warfare as a Family Style

Few things hold us like home. The current celebration of traditional family values expresses a need for refuge, pleasure, and acceptance that is as impossible to forgo as it is difficult to satisfy. If nostalgia for the past is largely a sign of present frustration, it has only served to heighten interest in what makes families fail. A burgeoning genre—the family antiromance—is appealing to that fascination with things gone wrong: the horror show of failed intimacy. The ease with which incidents of family violence make their way from the police blotter to nonfiction books and TV miniseries discloses how many facets of our culture are touched and how many eyes are widened by families that cannot be said to work at all.

When the family romance hits the rocks in this new genre, it explodes. Faith McNulty's *The Burning Bed* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980) depicted an abused wife who set fire to her sleeping husband; Joe McGinniss's *Fatal Vision* (Putnam, 1983) introduced us to a young physician whose wife and family were deadweights to his ambitions and who murdered to escape. Both books were later made into TV shows.

A new page was added to the album of family murder when Franklin Bradshaw, a Utah Mormon millionaire, was shot one Sunday morning in August 1978 by his grandson, a prep-school junior, at the insistence of his own daughter, Frances Bradshaw Schreuder, a convert to the Episcopal church and a resident of Manhattan's Upper East Side, and a member of the board of trustees of the New York City Ballet. Parricide and the corruption of one's own son to a trigger man express a derangement of attachments spilling over three generations. Shana Alexander's *Nutcracker* and Jonathan Coleman's *At Mother's Request* take on the difficult task of unraveling such a crime.* Each is slated to be a separate miniseries, providing next season's television with a heavy dose of family anguish. Each has a claim to truth.

• Shana Alexander tells the story as a fable of social climbing in which each principal player is a familiar social type. Frances Schreuder is the renegade child of an abstemious, workaholic father and a mother who embodied purity:

> No one would seem to have had deeper family feelings, longings, yearnings, attachments, not the most devout Mormon—than Berenice Jewett Bradshaw. She is a woman who will organize her entire life around her family . . . and ultimately will sacrifice all on the high altar of motherly and grandmotherly devotion.

"Evil" Frances had tried and failed to escape the work-and-family ethic, first through education (she was expelled from Bryn Mawr for drinking and stealing); next by marrying European charmers who seemed to offer a life of sophistication (she was twice divorced and without support); and finally by siphoning money from her mother to create a setting of success by her choice of address, religion, private schools for her children, and by using the Bradshaw money to propel herself onto the board of trustees of the New York City Ballet. She killed her father because he was writing a new will that would disinherit her and prevent her from securing her position on the board.

Alexander has a savage eye for the disparities between the world Frances wanted, epitomized by the *Nutcracker* ballet, and the one she choreo-

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*Shana Alexander, *Nutcracker*. New York: Doubleday and Co. 431 pp. $17.95.

Jonathan Coleman, *At Mother's Request*. New York: Atheneum. 608 pp. $19.95.

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graphed for herself. Spending her days in bed wearing filthy nightgowns and stinking from a lifelong habit of not bathing, Frances lived in almost total social isolation, buying $10,000 earrings and $1,000 nightgowns she seemed never to wear. By underwriting fundraising dinners, and much of the cost of Balanchine's last ballet, "Frances was moving into a new world of culture and beauty," although she could not pronounce Balanchine's name correctly. Tolerated more than accepted by the wealthy people she met, Frances earned the following ratings: "Her white mink looked secondhand." "She reminded me of Tara"—decayed and neglected. "A woman who was really brought up with money wouldn't wear a long white dress with black shoes and an old bag." No matter. Frances as parricide had become Lady Bountiful.

Alexander's fast-paced narrative records the voice of New York malice, wealth, and power, providing enough of a view of the workings of a prestigious ballet company to appeal to the taste for celebrity gossip. The problem is that the emotions of the characters strain against the social stereotypes of the blindly doting mother, the dour father, the ambitious daughter, which shape her book.

• Jonathan Coleman is a less polished but more thoughtful writer who approaches the family as the sufferers they clearly were. At 75, Bradshaw had a stoic dignity. Working seven days a week, rising early for a regimen of a hundred push-ups and 15 minutes of rope jumping before his 10- to 12-hour workdays at his auto-parts warehouse on the seamy side of Salt Lake City, Bradshaw was a harsh parody of the American ideal of plain living and hard work. For a briefcase he used a ragged Coors carton salvaged from someone else's garbage pile; his clothes were thrift-shop workpants and T-shirts. In winter, when the zipper on his jacket gave out, he tied it around himself with rope. He clipped the blank portions of letters for his own stationery, inserting them into an old typewriter that had lost bits of its letters. His files were crates from the refuse of fruit markets. Yet he presided over an auto-parts empire and had parlayed an undergraduate education in geology into cornering 40 percent of all oil and gas leases in America. At the time of his death his assets were in the tens of millions, some scattered among the orange crates or tucked into outdated auto-parts catalogues in a filing system not even he had mastered.

Bradshaw shared few meals with his wife, Berenice. Languishing in their house in a working-class neighborhood, and irritable in her 10-year-old Oldsmobile, Berenice only suspected they were fabulously rich. Unable to pry from her husband either money or an accounting of his worth, she resorted to begging his foreman to buy her a new car from company funds, to stealing, and to returning to work in the warehouse at 74 to facilitate her thefts while also earning an hourly wage. Berenice was a vivacious woman who prized her good looks; she had married Bradshaw when he was a college-football player, and she was a social success. She had not taken kindly to the birth of three children in rapid succession and a late-coming fourth (the lethal Frances), economic hardship early in marriage, and to her husband's refusal to spend or acknowledge his wealth. Berenice's desire for a successful husband had been ironically fulfilled by a man who had amassed a fortune, but who had no desire for anything money could buy.

Frances wanted to escape from both her parents. She succeeded in planning the perfect crime, which would never have been solved had she disposed of the murder weapon as her son, Marc, had wished. How it was found, how alert detectives developed evidence, and how the family's snarled emotions emerged in their legal wrangles is Coleman's primary focus.

ALTHOUGH COLEMAN AND ALEXANDER EACH imply or state that the Bradshaw marriage was related to the murder, neither explores or analyzes how the patterns established in the family led to the crime. Yet the marriage was clearly a battle of the sexes whose bunkers were the yin and yang of the auto-parts warehouse and the home, and whose weapons were money and love. Far from being only the eccentricity that Coleman and Alexander describe, Bradshaw's tight fist was self-serving: it won him credit for purity and simple living while frustrating Berenice's love of comfort and good times, keeping her at a high pitch of anger. She had a capacity for fun and an independence of spirit soon perverted to vindictiveness. What distinguishes these adversaries from the familiar figure of the husband turned workaholic to escape his wife and the wife willing to do anything to get a response from him is the extent to which their war became institutionalized in virtually all the family's patterns.

How can sexual warfare be transmitted from one generation to another? By what process did Frances take up her mother's fight? If this story can tell us anything about how a family can go haywire, it clearly illustrates how a mixture of scapegoating, exploitation, and idealization, fueled by sibling rivalries, can alter the attachment between parents and children and among children. Berenice drove a

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wedge between her husband and children by presenting him as the source of her troubles and raising them to feel like misfits in his Mormon world.

Berenice seems to have wanted to foist upon them the burdens he placed on her. The greatest of these was motherhood. She exploited her two older daughters as helpers, referring to Marilyn, the oldest, as "the other mother," and refusing to acknowledge the physical weakness of her younger daughter. Her only son, Robert, who wanted to be like his father, was cruelly treated and scapegoated as the family irritant. When he began to have seizures at about age 10, he was sent to his basement room in the care of his sisters and was never medically treated. While Berenice lamented what Franklin didn't do for Robert and her daughters pleaded for medical help, Robert descended into madness and spent most of his adult life in mental hospitals where, several years after a lobotomy, he died. In Frances, her youngest child, Berenice found her most ardent ally, one who did not have to be punished for having Franklin's sobriety and who fully accepted Berenice's view that Franklin was responsible for all the troubles in the family.

Frances received a love that reflected the flowering of Berenice's disgust with Franklin. She was virtually raised as his opposite: where he and her older sisters were hardworking, honest, and reliable, she was incapable of sustained effort, dishonest, and vacillating. She had seen the demolition of her brother, and the unrewarded virtue of her older sisters. Where Berenice had sent the older girls to local schools and taught them to make their own clothes, Frances was sent to Bryn Mawr with an expensive wardrobe. There the renegade behavior that had been rewarded in the past grew into criminality: she forged checks stolen from classmates, took what she wanted, and ignored all the rules.

Although Frances lacked her father's strengths, she proved all too much like him. In an odd parody of her father's ecstasies of acquisition and self-deprivation, she bought expensive jewelry and clothes yet wore the same filthy things day after day. She rented huge mansions in the Hamptons in which she lived in isolation. She shared her father's need to withhold from Berenice what she needed most: gratitude and admiration.

Ironically, Frances's bond with Berenice was expressed in a recapitulation of her way of dealing with children. Frances scapegoated her oldest son, Larry, virtually from birth. She locked him out for weeks at a time, refusing him access to home and clothing. After building a "nest" of cardboard boxes in the stairwell of their luxury apartment building and living there he sank into unreality, as his uncle Robert had done before him, and was hospitalized for violent acts.

Exploiting her younger son, Marc, as her housekeeper, cook, and confidant, Frances alternately seduced him to obedience by her total reliance on him, by threats of suicide if he failed, and of expulsion from the house if he refused to do her bidding. As her mother had pinned her fantasies of a socially exciting life of irresponsibility and good times on Frances, so Frances pinned her dreams of glory on her own youngest child, Lavinia.

Frances's daughter was clearly raised to redeem Frances from her social disabilities: her bizarre isolation, her bad smell and poor grooming, her "uncultured" Utah parents. Hiring a nanny to raise her properly, teach her to bathe and keep her room immaculate, Frances pushed her to become a ballerina who might one day command center stage.

Frances was calculating, conscious of the extent to which frustration could itself be a means of binding, controlling, and subjugating other people. She was able to make her mother and her children feel like everything, the most important people to her—and like nothing, refuse she could dispose of.

Given Frances's success in draining money from the Bradshaws, her motive for parricide seems problematic. Both Alexander and Coleman make clear that Franklin was determined to stop her, yet both writers also believe that he would have backed down if she had attempted a rapprochement. Why did she resort to murder? Then, having murdered well enough to avoid discovery for two years, why did she fail to dispose of the murder weapon, the only evidence against her?

Coleman speculates that her failure to destroy the weapon expresses a wish to be caught and punished. Yet her guilt was even greater and more complex. Given her history of suicide attempts and destructive behavior, her guilt probably predated the crime. What provoked her to murder may have been a desire to die and bind others to her in death. Although her behavior seemed totally geared to self-interest, she was herself ultimately caught on the treadmill of feeling like everything and nothing. The self-hatred expressed in her personal habits was apparently not relieved by the opulent settings with which she tried to relieve it. Her image of her daughter as ballerina was not only an idealized self-image but also the flip side of her disgust with what she was. Parricide and the corruption of her son expressed an attack on both her own origins and on her offspring. To kill her father

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was to kill part of herself; to have him killed by her son was to bind together the demise of her father, her son, and herself in the act of murder.

The sexual warfare that dominated the pattern of relationships in the Bradshaw family was one that programmed all for self-destructiveness. Ironically, the family style that generated the murder also generated Frances's punishment. Refusing Marc's plea to get rid of the murder weapon, she entrusted it to a friend to whom she owed $3,000. Her delight in withholding this amount even after she had access to an immense fortune rendered her friend vulnerable to her sister Marilyn, who had offered a $10,000 reward for information leading to the solution of the crime. Marilyn, who was sure that Frances had done it, made it her business to "sympathize" with this man's rage at Frances until he delivered the gun. Frances's need to exploit Marc without limit led her to adopt a trial defense that named him as a vicious killer who planned and executed the crime alone. Pushed by detectives, the prosecution, and by a life sentence into facing his mother's willingness to sacrifice his life, Marc testified against her for an early parole.

The war between Berenice and Franklin transcended death. Even after the conviction of Franklin's killers, Berenice continued to wage it. She turned from Marilyn for being his champion and accused her of destroying the family. Disinheriting her, she made Frances, now in prison awaiting appeal, her sole heir. In response, Frances frequently refuses to accept her mother's visits. Scapegoating, exploiting, and withholding from each other, the clan remains bound together by a battle whose strategies have survived all.

How can one explain the fascination with families whose disorder is so extreme? It is clear that the family antiromance speaks to a time when too few families work. The Bradshaw's story offers a chance to see in enlarged and dramatic form the mechanisms that connect extreme pathology with the behavioral quirks and styles of families whose problems are less severe. In its disclosure of how sexual warfare evolves into a family style, a patterning of discord and destructiveness, the story offers glimmers of self-recognition.

Yet the awareness gained from the antiromance does not necessarily incite reform. The fact that the genre focuses on extremes of violence also serves to reassure the reader that others are even worse off. If the fascination with the life-styles of the rich and famous serves to inflame envy, the family antiromance creates complacency. It can enable the reader or viewer to divorce self-recognition from self-implication. Coleman and Alexander hammer the Bradshaw story into the well-known television shapes of the cop show or the fable of the female social climber. Such use of form and format permits an escape from the whole picture of family violence by focusing on selected parts. Such tendencies are intensified by television, which blurs the distinction between surface and substance. The war between the Bradshaws will become part of the war of the networks as CBS brings us Coleman's view and NBC offers us Alexander's.

Shallowness is not a surprising response to the suspicion that the current crises in family life are insoluble. That the family antiromance has become popular precisely at the time when the hearth has become the sacred flame of the religious and social right suggests how widespread alarm is. The nostalgic dream of a return to an idealized traditional family and preoccupation with family violence are flip sides of the same fear that the family has fallen into a chaos from which it will not easily emerge. The antiromance appeals to the sense of impasse: it discloses the worst and reassures; it acknowledges the depths but flattens the emotional force of failed intimacy. It assimilates family violence into a familiar pop culture of combativeness and aggression. In doing so, the antiromance implies that the answer to a seemingly insoluble problem is to get used to it. □

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George Ross

Italian Labor: Gains & Losses

VISIONS OF EMANCIPATION: THE ITALIAN WORKERS' MOVEMENT SINCE 1945 by Joanne Barkan. New York: Praeger. 288 pp. $24.95.

The *dramatis personae* in Joanne Barkan's analysis of the contemporary Italian workers' movement possess great subtlety and substance. There is a Communist party (PCI) that, even reluctant observers admit, has been unusually lucid in the face of social and political change. Similar things can be said of the PCI's labor ally, the Italian General Confederation of Labor (CGIL). Arrayed around this *communisant* core are other forces—the Italian Confederation of Workers Unions (CISL), the Catholic union once linked to the Christian Democrats, an active women's movement, and small leftist political groups. From Cold War weakness and division, this movement maneuvered skillfully through de-Stalinization and then to great social effervescence in the 1960s. Because of its successes, however, the movement faced complex new choices. Those it made in the later 1970s, in a rapidly changing economy, turned out to be severely debilitating. By the 1980s, befuddled by new and unfathomable circumstances, it was once again weakened and disoriented.

Here we have a tragic scenario of Shakespearean proportions. Joanne Barkan will forgive us if we review it in such terms. Act I, which lasts from 1944 to the late 1950s, finds the collective hero paralyzed by external adversity and character flaws. Once having successfully reconstituted itself after Fascism, the Italian workers' movement was nearly broken again by the coming of the Cold War. When the PCI and CGIL took pro-Soviet positions after 1947, an extended period of political isolation and labor-market exclusion ensued. On the trade union front, Cold War politicization—the use of the CGIL as a transmission belt by the Communists and the manipulation of anticommunism by the Church, Christian Democrats, employers, and the United States—quickly led to organizational division. The Catholic CISL and the Social Democratic Italian Union of Labor (UIL) split off from the CGIL at this point.

The Christian Democrats' long period of political hegemony began at this point. Their Cold War economic policies, premised on low wages and exports, together with autocratic business strategies, set the stage for the Italian economic miracle. Henceforth employers pursued what Barker describes as "Cold War in the factories," using militant anticommunism to their advantage. Persistently high levels of unemployment and the inability of unions to establish positions on the shop floor tipped the scales towards Italian business for more than a decade.

Barkan's second act begins in the depths of the late 1950s. Here her characters assess the errors of their past ways. The PCI demonstrated unusual flexibility, at least compared with most of its *partis frères*, in de-Stalinizing, attenuating its earlier subordination to the Soviet Union, and rethinking its hard-line workerism. The CGIL, now less a political tool and more a trade union, was better able to respond to the changing environment. The Catholic CISL seized upon the new "social" concerns of Catholics—these were the privileged years of Pope John XXIII and Vatican II—to develop innovative shop floor approaches, bargaining productivity in-

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creases for a new trade union presence inside the firm. The CISL's competitive successes obliged the CGIL to take up these approaches itself in ways that made united union action possible.

THESE ADJUSTMENTS CAME at the right moment, for the seamy sides of the 1950s "economic miracle" began to show. Migration of labor from the underdeveloped South to Northern factories accentuated Italy's dismal imbalance and created new problems in the North. Workers fresh from peasant poverty were ill prepared for harsh factory discipline. Urban areas were even less prepared to welcome them. Housing, health care, education, transport, and other public services were substandard or lacking. Families and lives were shockingly disrupted. Old and new workers alike faced employers determined to maintain profitability at almost any cost by rapidly increasing productivity. But adaptable labor organizations began to find eager new recruits. Slowly, surely, the Italian workers' movement began to rebuild.

Act III consists of Triumph and Transcendence, with the lead characters' earlier self-examinations and changes bearing fruit. The failure of the center-left coalition of Christian Democrats and Socialists of the mid-1960s meant that needed reform did not come. The faltering of the economic miracle deepened workers' grievances, while increasing union strength sharply cut the maneuverability of government and employers. It grew more costly to continue low-wage, "bash the workers" strategies. Italian students caught the protest contagion. The Great Crowd Scenes of the later 1960s were being prepared.

Barkan's plot reaches for its dramatic peak beginning in 1968-1969. Italy's paroxysm of social protest, which Barkan recounts economically and elegantly, was different from those in other Western societies because it was primarily a *working class* explosion, a genuine "resurgence of class conflict." The organizing capacities of older workers joined with the anger of "new workers" in the North. Beginning in the "hot autumn" of 1969, rank-and-file actions took new forms. Breaking with traditional bread-and-butter concerns, the protests raised egalitarian notions pointing towards industrial democracy. Led by the CGIL, the unions tried to bring spontaneity within their organizational purview, quite self-consciously integrating shop floor innovations into new union practices. Rather than ignoring, or trying to shoot it, the unions decided to "ride the tiger."

At this climactic point, then, leading organizational *personae* were able to listen to the wisdom of the crowds. The consequences in the early 1970s for workers, unions, and the Italian economy were very great. Wages went up. Eventually the long-desired *scala mobile* (indexation of wage growth to inflation levels) was won. Workers and unions earned important new rights of expression on the shop floor. New forms of working-class representation in the workplace were created—the *delegati* and workers' councils. The oft-destructive pattern of competitive union pluralism was replaced by united action both at industrial and national levels. For a period there were huge increases in trade union power. Indeed, at a moment when the party system was paralyzed, the unions, led by CGIL, began to think of becoming quasi-parties themselves, trying to wield their new bargaining power not only with business, but with the state. That they were less than successful in this pursuit of basic social reforms (more equitable spending between North and South, investment control generally, and more expansive social services) took little away from the originality of their efforts.

In Act IV, alas, triumph fuels the characterological weaknesses of the protagonists, leading to a tragic denouement. Once the "easiest" victories had been won, Italian labor, facing a refractory political environment, turned to an eternal trade union question. How could it best transfer new resources from unionism to politics in ways that would advance the cause? Here Barkan as playwright is gentle but firm. The movement answered this question incorrectly, essentially because of the PCI's disregard for the movement's autonomy. To simplify Barkan's analysis unduly, the biggest mistake came when the PCI adopted its strategy of "historic compromise," its effort to bargain its greatly increased electoral strength for coparticipation in government with the Christian Democrats. In an effort to prove itself moderate enough for this goal, the PCI, using the CGIL, enlisted the union movement's help. At what was to be a critical turning point, the Communists thus imposed a politically-inspired and demobilizing self-effacement on the unions.

FLAWS IN A TRAGIC HERO'S character become clear only in the light of subsequent events. The last act of Barkan's *mise-en-scène* reviews the terrible consequences of the PCI's mistaken choices for the Italian workers' movement. In the short run, unions voluntarily accepted wage controls, granted employers new power over labor mobility, and carefully limited concessions to Italy's women's movement. The tragic problem, to Barkan, was that such policies intervened at exactly the moment when

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"the crisis," to use a common European expression, was undercutting the socioeconomic foundation of earlier workers' successes. Changing relationships between Italy and the international economy and, within Italy, between larger and smaller industry; a new wave of technological change; new Italian managerial strategies; and the inability of the left to make any breakthroughs all combined to create a dangerous environment for Italian workers. The PCI's historic compromise led to a "softening" of Italian labor at the very moment when crisis conditions demanded tough positions to protect earlier victories. In consequence, the 1980s became years of plummeting union strength, new divisions between union organizations, corporatistic (as opposed to class-oriented) base-level responses, union incapacity to enlist support from a new generation of workers, rollbacks, and the like. The curtain falls, therefore, on scenes of devastation.

There are a few ambiguities in Barkan's masterly plot and character development. It seems clear that the party-trade union relationship as evolved by the PCI and CGIL was still too party-dominated, still too crypto-Leninist. Barkan is careful to avoid the brutal analytical condemnations that many would use to characterize this; but PCI-CGIL ties are clearly what she sees as the fatal contradiction at the heart of the Italian workers' movement. And here she may well be right. Whatever the ineptitude or perspicacity of the PCI's strategic choices (and Barkan presents examples of both), they were almost always too easily adopted by the CGIL because of party domination. Given the CGIL's power over the union movement more generally, such choices were often decisive.

A union better anchored in strictly labor-market concerns might have been able to resist party pressures. But such a union might also have resisted creative party pressures, such as unquestionably came from the PCI in the later 1960s. On balance, it is probably dangerous to workers for their trade unions to be overly subordinate to political parties, given the occasionally contradictory rhythms at which labor market and political lives evolve. But there are also moments when such subordination may help unions to overcome their own tendencies to conservative routine. The dilemma of reaching sensible compromise between trade unions and party politics far transcends specific cases of Communist-union bonds, of course. Whether posed in PCI-CGIL terms, or in a number of other permutations (British Labour Party-TUC, AFL-CIO-Democrats) it has not been easy to resolve.

Beyond this lies the PCI's choice of "historic compromise." Barkan has done a better job of explaining its consequences than anyone else writing in English. Nonetheless this reader went away from her drama powerfully puzzled. The question the "historic compromise" tried to answer was one *any* labor movement in similar circumstances would have to face. It was not just because the Italian left was dominated by a strong Communist party that this choice presented itself. Despite massive left electoral and union victories, the deeply entrenched Christian Democratic political caste in Italy, with conservative Italy well arrayed behind it, simply refused to budge. Short of seizing the Quirinal Palace (and perhaps the Vatican as well), notwithstanding the youthful enthusiasm of a small menagerie of *gauchiste* grouplets advocating a bloodbath of terrorist stupidity—how could the left make conservative Italy move?

The "historic compromise" proved to be a risky undertaking, and one that ultimately failed. But it is not at all clear what, if any, other options promised anything better. Perhaps taking no risks at all and hunkering down to protect what they had

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already won might have been a better choice for the Italian unions. Very cautiously, Barkan implies that there was a more *radical* line that might have worked. Beyond being more hospitable to the women's movement—and Italian unions did better at this than any other labor movement we can think of—what would this line have looked like? Despite the merits of her analysis, Barkan is too quick to accept New Left criticism of organized labor as strategic wisdom.

Visions of Emancipation fills a real need. Here, in well-written and well-researched form, is social history nourished by empathy for people, events, and organizations. Barkan has used the library well, but the book bespeaks a vitality beyond the academic. There are pages full of wisdom about women in the work force and the Italian women's movement. And the volume concludes with a number of fascinating recorded interviews with Turinese workers. Readers will find *Visions of Emancipation* an engaged left book, but still better, a left book without the slightest sectarian axe to grind.□

Simon Leys

Maoist History, Maoist Myth

THE LONG MARCH, by Harrison E. Salisbury. Bessie/Harper & Row. 419 pp. $20.95.

On the subject of totalitarian states, it has been said that the most reliable writers essentially pertain to two categories: those who live outside and are not allowed in—and those who live inside and are not allowed out. In recent years, however, some changes have been taking place, particularly regarding China: now, to some extent, serious scholars and journalists can carry their researches into the field, whereas a number of Chinese intellectuals are able to visit Western countries. Still, the old axiom has not become entirely obsolete. It retains at least a fundamental cautionary value: considering the very nature of these regimes, their pervasive ability to manipulate information, and their basic view that ultimately every undertaking is political, we should as a rule subject to close scrutiny any research that was initiated and pursued with the approval and active support of the ruling bureaucracy.

This principle should present particular relevance in a case such as Harrison Salisbury's, since his book, which deals with a highly sensitive and timely issue of party history, was made possible only thanks to the special and direct cooperation of the Chinese leadership. Without questioning the intentions and good faith of the author, we should at least attempt to understand why, at this precise moment, the Communist authorities who had previously denied similar facilities to eminent writers working on the same subject, suddenly showed such sympathetic interest for Salisbury's project, and decided to facilitate his investigations into a crucial and ill-explored episode of their history—an episode that hitherto had remained virtually taboo, even for their own historians. The very fact that Salisbury himself does not really answer this riddle, but simply marvels at his journalistic good luck, should further stimulate our critical awareness.

THE ENGLISH EXPRESSION "LONG MARCH," which is conventionally used to designate the retreat of the Communist forces from their Jiangxi base to a more remote shelter in northern Shaanxi (October 1934–October 1935), has a certain quality of understatement that rings well and catches the imagination. The original term "Chang Zheng," however, is somewhat less modest—"the Long Expedition of Conquest" would probably be a more accurate rendition. Actually, if the Communists had been concerned not with propaganda but with harsh truth, they could have called this episode more aptly "the Long Rout" or "the Protracted Disaster."

In the early 1930s, the Chinese Communist party, which was then led by a series of Moscow's alumni, had established a fledgling "Soviet Republic" in the backwoods of Jiangxi province. The Chinese Nationalist government launched a succession of campaigns against the Red areas; ultimately blockade tactics proved successful, and the Communists found themselves progressively strangled in the tightening noose set by the encircling forces of the government. In the end, they were left with no alternative: they had to break free in one desperate move, and run for their lives. The first stage of their mass escape was catastrophic—they were repeatedly hit and beaten by the pursuing armies of Chiang Kai-shek. Faced with annihilation, the party leadership convened an emergency

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meeting that was to remain a historic turning point, as it marked the true beginning of Mao's power. (Zunyi Conference, January 1935).

The actual proceedings of that conference remain largely shrouded in mystery; however, its most momentous decision was to elect Mao a member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo—the inner circle of leadership. Mao had previously been pushed aside from the government of the Jiangxi Soviet; now, not only was his authority restored, but he was put virtually in supreme command, both politically and militarily. (It actually took another ten years before his absolute authority was officially ratified by a party congress—Seventh Congress, 1945—but total indifference for all legal forms was always a characteristic feature of Maoism.)

With Mao in charge, the Communist retreat was not at the end of its tribulations. In fact, the worst was still to come—new battles, and even more grueling struggles against natural obstacles. Yet, Mao's visionary genius and unorthodox methods, which many years later were to prove catastrophic in a time of peace, played a providential role in a time of catastrophe. His tactical initiatives were sometimes reckless and costly, but always imaginative and inspired: what was even more important, he revived the moral energies of the rank and file, he injected hope and meaning even into defeat, and a sense of purpose into what had until then been a blind and demoralizing retreat. However, to say that he saved the situation would be an exaggeration; after all, when the remnants of the "Long March" finally settled in a barren and desolate corner of North Shaanxi, they were a mere 4,000 out of the 86,000 who had evacuated the Jiangxi base twelve months earlier. This wretched handful of survivors was in such a state of exhaustion that it could have been annihilated with one blow. As Chiang Kai-shek was already poised to deliver the coup de grâce, the Communists were saved in the nick of time by the Japanese aggression, which made it morally impossible for Chinese to continue to fight Chinese: the pressure of public opinion and of patriotic emotion culminated in an army mutiny and forced Chiang to agree to a truce. The Communists thus won an unexpected reprieve, which subsequent developments allowed them to turn into victory twelve years later—but this is another story.

The fact that the "Long March" was disastrous in an immediate and practical sense—the Chinese Communist party never came so close to total destruction—does not detract from its political significance, which was, and remains, momentous. The "Long March" was much more than a historical episode, or a heroic feat of human resilience against crushing odds. As Judith Shapiro put it accurately (in a review of Salisbury's book); for the Chinese Communists, it is truly a "myth of the origins"—and this, in turn, explains their long reluctance to allow it to be thoroughly investigated and assessed by scholars and historians. For decades the only account that was available to the Chinese public was a Chinese translation of the very sketchy and starry-eyed report which Edgar Snow had concocted forty years ago from a few interviews with Mao and other leaders in Yan'an. Subsequently, even this rather naive and simplistic narrative was withdrawn from circulation, and for many years, Chinese readers had no information on the matter besides the official propaganda sermons which held that the "Long March" had been achieved by a small brotherhood of giants who, having demonstrated in their superhuman trials that they were selfless, fearless, invincible and infallible, acquired once and for all the absolute right to rule over the Chinese nation. In turn, the Chinese populace was invited to accept without a murmur that their perpetual leaders should now enjoy all the perquisites and privileges of a new ruling class, whereas they themselves should imitate the shining examples of the "Long March" and cultivate in everyday life the virtues of self-sacrifice, heroism, and asceticism.

With the "Cultural Revolution," Maoism reached a point of murderous madness which provoked fear and revulsion even among the ruling elite of the party. The present predicament of Deng Xiaoping and his team is that they must manage to liquidate all Maoist policies without eroding the base on which rests the legitimacy of their own power. To achieve such a delicate and contradictory operation, a revival of the "myth of the origins" now appears particularly appropriate; in the "Long March," we can see Mao in his creative years, still vested with the Revolutionary Mandate, gloriously opening the way towards the future, and being assisted in this immortal enterprise by a group of heroes who, today, remain the staunch pilots of China, and whose presence around Deng should vouch for the soundness and orthodoxy of the post-Maoist policies.

In this light, it is easy to understand why the 50th anniversary of the completion of the "Long March" was celebrated with such pomp in China last year. However, the timely publication of Salisbury's book and the very nature of its message seem to match so closely the tune of these celebra-

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tions that one cannot refrain from a certain feeling of uneasiness.

In a remarkable essay on the career of Wilfred Burchett (*Quadrant*, August 1985), Robert Manne pointed out that one of the greatest professional successes of this notorious agent of Soviet disinformation was to have arranged for Harrison Salisbury to visit North Vietnam in 1966; Burchett then provided the American journalist with perspectives and ideas which Salisbury subsequently presented as his own. Burchett, of course, knew better than to complain about what could have been considered a case of "benign plagiarism"; as he wrote to his son, he felt that it was far more useful to have these things printed under Salisbury's signature in the *New York Times*. This incident may provide a useful clue to help us assess Salisbury's working methods.

Salisbury took the pain to retrace the entire itinerary of the "Long March," by jeep, on horseback, and on foot. He spent months interviewing countless participants and witnesses, and sifted through an impressive quantity of documentation. His work is generally meticulous and painstaking, sometimes to the point of tediousness. He has gathered an amount of information that will certainly remain a useful reference for future historians. However, on these events, he seems to be throwing a certain light which appears to be *precisely* the one that Peking wishes to project now.

In a way, Salisbury's quest for the "untold story" of the "Long March" reminds me of the famous anecdote about President Fallières digging for truffles. This president of the French Third Republic, while on an official visit to the Périgord region, was invited by an over-zealous prefect to witness the operation of truffle-gathering, which is the most remarkable industry of that particular area. Truffles cannot be cultivated; they grow underground on the roots of wild oaks. Pigs, which are very fond of these gastronomic delicacies, are taken to the woods on a leash, and, with their ultrasensitive noses, they smell out the invisible truffles and indicate where to dig for them. The presidential party was invited to follow an old, experienced pig that took them straight to the foot of the nearest tree; in front of the president and of the cameras of the press, the ground was duly dug, and within minutes an enormous truffle appeared: it had a tricolor ribbon tied around it.

Harrison Salisbury went bravely into the woods and dug earnestly for facts. What he finally unearthed looks in some respects very much like the real thing; I only wonder if it was originally delivered with a ribbon. □

Peter Mandler

British Labour, Troubles & Ideas

AGAINST SOCIALIST ILLUSION, by David Selbourne. New York: Schocken. 344 pp. $22.95.

FOR A PLURALIST SOCIALISM, by Michael Rustin. London and New York: Verso. (Distributed by Schocken.) 256 pp. Cloth, $28.00. Paper, $7.95.

In the United States, the relationship between socialists—often economic and cultural outsiders—and a more "American" working class has generally been problematic. For much of this century,

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however, Britain has provided an alluring counter-example. The British Labour party seemed to have achieved a balanced partnership between a mass working-class constituency and a middle-class socialist leadership. This partnership was seen at its best in the 1945–51 Labour governments, which appeared to be delivering long-awaited goods and services to the working class while widely diffusing the social democratic values cherished by the middle-class elite.

With hindsight, we can see that this partnership was short-lived. The Labour vote peaked in 1951 and has been steadily declining ever since. As early as the mid-'50s, such cultural commentators as Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams warned of a breakdown in working-class values, making the constituency less amenable to control by the elite. The industrial militancy of the late '60s and early '70s, aimed as much against Labour as against Conservative governments, suggested that Labour voters had radically different priorities from Labour cabinet members.

By the time of the last Labour governments of 1974–79, the great partnership had degenerated into a tawdry pact for the control of inflation and unemployment: corporatism pure and simple, such as had been achieved by many nonsocialist regimes elsewhere in the world (Japan, the United States), and more successfully. When it was finally acknowledged that Labour could no longer deliver the goods (either in welfare services or economic growth), and the government collapsed in a wave of public-sector strikes, it was belatedly appreciated that the common fund of moral and political values that had united the former partners had also long since been drained.

THE POLITICAL CHAOS that has ensued within the Labour party since 1979 has been bitter and unedifying. Some of this misery and confusion is evident in David Selbourne's polemic against "socialist illusion." Selbourne, a political theorist at Ruskin College, the labor movement's Oxford outpost, rejects the whole postwar partnership between socialists and workers as a sham. Working people, he insists, have never been interested in anything but "individual appropriation." They have only accepted Labour-party leadership because Labour backs them in their sectional struggle for higher wages and because it provides them, when wages prove inadequate, with a public-sector supplement in the form of welfare benefits. Until the 1960s, he argues, the sham was sustained by "socialist utilitarians"—moderate politicians of the Clem Attlee or Tony Crosland stripe—who fed working-class lusts for material gain by means of trade-union power and the welfare state, and cynically called it socialism.

Selbourne's real villains, however, are not the utilitarians but the "socialist utopians"—by which he means the mixed bag of neo-Marxist academics, students, and public-sector workers who made up the British New Left. In recent years these "utopians" have driven the Labour party to the left and imposed upon it a more genuine (but hopelessly self-deluding) vision of socialism. What infuriates Selbourne about this New Left is not its utopianism (which he considers merely pitiable), but its desertion of the working class. The new Labour party, Selbourne maintains, has indulged in childish fantasies of "socialism." Instead, it should have been defending the "Rights of Man" (individual liberties, both political and economic) against the oppression of the police, the courts, the commissars, and, yes, the capitalists—for in Selbourne's view the Rights of Man have always been the worker's best defense against capitalism.

IT IS ALWAYS SALUTARY to be reminded of the place of liberty in the pantheon of socialist values, especially when the reminder exhibits such a genuine passion for the rights of the "ordinary" individual, oppressed by concentrations of power. But Selbourne's insistence on the overwhelming primacy of "individual appropriation" will not so much enrage his readers (as he obviously intends) as puzzle them. Are popular conceptions of property right unalloyed by considerations of justice or proportion? Do people consider that mansions are held as rightfully as cottages? Do trade unions exist *solely* to secure the maximum wage for their members? Are struggles for workplace control merely another form of individual appropriation, a demand for "property in the job"? Do working people view all social benefits as second-best supplements to wages earned in the marketplace?

Selbourne grants that health provision is "the great exception to this general rule." What about pensions, unemployment benefits—and public-sector employment? Do people generally prefer benefits conferred by the private sector? If so, it is hard to understand why state pensions, the National Health Service, and (to take one example) municipal-works departments have survived competition from private insurance and enterprise. Is working-class acceptance of social benefits simply another (though disguised) manifestation of the impulse to individual appropriation? If so, it is difficult to explain the persistent universalism of the British welfare state, its hostility to means tests, its fre-

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quent disjunctions between contributions and benefits, its nationalistic spirit.

Selbourne seems to believe that capitalism has successfully implanted its values in all its victims. As a political theorist, he prefers to assert and argue from first principles. Consequently he falls into a quasi-structuralism that will brook no muddling together of capitalism and socialism. Everything socialists seek to do in capitalist society is, in Selbourne's definitions, fatally undermined by capitalist values. (This conviction explains his curious fascination with the *trotskisants* of the *New Left Review*, who share his analysis but would foist an authoritarian "pure socialism" on an unwilling working class.) Therefore he cannot imagine a socialist program that would defend liberal democratic rights, much less broaden them, nor a working class that would espouse some collectivist values under capitalism.

There are, however, points in his breathless polemic where Selbourne seems to relent. He acknowledges the prior existence of a socialist tradition that defended individual integrity and equality, "beauty and culture," before its corruption at the hands of the utilitarians and final destruction at the hands of the utopians. This tradition he normally identifies with the Victorians (Carlyle, Ruskin, Morris, et al.), though also with Tawney and, in one unguarded moment, with "yesterday's Labour Party." Behind the anger and the rhetoric, one hears a muffled call for a reknitting of the old partnership on the basis of "yesterday's" values: fellowship, mutual aid, dignity, equality of status, the development of individual capacities. Selbourne has concluded that the means adopted by socialists since the war, far from diffusing these values in the working-class community, have undercut them, and so he discards "socialism" as an effective political program; but the socialist inspiration remains.

MICHAEL RUSTIN HAS COME to quite different conclusions as to the utility of socialism. His book is living disproof of Selbourne's contention that the British New Left abandoned the working class for Marxist utopias. For this book, published under the paperback imprint of the *New Left Review*, also calls for "a renaissance of the alliance between the progressive intelligentsia and the organized working class," to be achieved not by discarding the concept of socialism but by reforging it. If the New Left ever did abandon the British working class, *For a Pluralist Socialism* is a clear sign that it is rushing back.

Some of Rustin's critique of the postwar Labour party parallels Selbourne's. Rustin regrets the degradation of the socialist ideal into materialism, the "increasing sectionalism" pasted over by corporatist decision-making, and the cheap pact struck between middle-class utilitarians and trade-union leaders. But in place of the political theorist's assertion that the working class has always cared only for individual appropriation, Rustin the sociologist substitutes an *analysis* of what the working class wanted then and what it does want now.

The old politics of welfarism and trade unionism may, Rustin concedes, have been appropriate in the period of the '50s and '60s, which was Labour's "demographic moment"—a time when the organized working class represented up to 70 percent of the electorate. Since then, however, the working class has both broken down economically and fragmented culturally. A new socialism can no longer be based on a single-class interest, particularly one so narrowly defined. Consequently Rustin, too, rummages around in pre-1951 Labour-party history, attempting to discover what bound different classes and interests together in a common vision of socialism:

> It is important now to recapture and renew the positive foundations of the earlier programs of reform and reconstruction, since if there is a popular basis for radical social programs in Britain it is likely to have some continuities with that experience.

Another closet Tawneyite! But, unlike Selbourne, Rustin looks to the public sector as the champion of "universalist values" in the war against capitalist individualism.

Strikingly, Rustin finds good things to say about practically every public-sector institution in British society, even products of the post-1964 corporatist phase, like planning agreements and the new nationalized industries. Such institutions at least provide a base upon which socialists can build, even if corrupted by undemocratic management and exploitation for private profit. Rustin also evinces pre-1951 influences in his realization that socialism is (or can be) for everyone, and not only for the working class and its "objective" allies. In a pluralist socialism, a large body of technicians—from engineers to architects to social scientists—could find outlets for their talents in planning and policy functions now vouchsafed only to an elite of "approved" academics and civil servants. In a truly pluralist socialism, higher education for all and at all ages could make everyone a technician of some sort.

Rustin's program seeks not only to defend the "universalist values of postwar social democracy"

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but also to extend and adapt them to the Britain of the 1980s. Building on well-established popular denials of market logic (denials that Selbourne claims do not exist), Rustin would recast some of the welfare state's paternalistic character in a language of rights better suited to today's self-assertive and demanding citizenry: a statutory right to work, a right to higher education, and more democratic rights in the form of proportional representation and administrative power devolved to Britain's regions. "Participation" is the byword.

David Selbourne calls such a vision of extended participation a "phantasmagoria," and although he hardly fleshes out his critique, there is a grain of truth in it. Rustin pins his hopes for a participatory society on the "rise in human expectations and aspirations" of the postwar period, the demand across the social spectrum for "political self-determination, material subsistence, and social self-expression." On the surface of it, this is an accurate, though vague characterization of postwar social trends. But Rustin has a more specific (and more dubious) notion of what these new "expectations and aspirations" are. In Rustin's view, people want more democracy, a larger welfare state, guaranteed employment, and "broader social rights to education, health, cultural access, and so on"—all demands that he identifies with the New Left and other social movements of the '60s.

However, as Selbourne might point out, one could just as accurately select another set of postwar demands, identified not with the left but with the right: demands for protection from the state, unfettered individual appropriation, and a purer freedom to consume (drugs, entertainment, sexual pleasure, and so on). In fact, the postwar West has gone both ways at once. The effects of social change in the last few decades have been multifarious and thus fragmenting.

Rustin acknowledges this fact by lowering his expectations, occasionally granting a plurality of interests and values, referring to regional differences, and cautiously advocating coalition between liberals and socialists. But he has not shaken off "socialist illusion" completely. Because he elides the discrete phenomena of postwar social change, he appears still to believe that "objective" forces favor the advent of his participatory, pluralistic socialism. The "educated professionals, white-collar workers, students and academics who provided the main social base for new left politics" are endowed with the status of "emerging strata," giving them greater prominence than they perhaps deserve.

While Rustin acknowledges a new "plurality of class interests," his prescriptions are aimed not at the fragmented working class but at this same group of British New Lefties with their neo-Marxist politics and alternative life-styles. In short, the term "New Left" is improperly applied to a new working class that is now more likely to be attracted to right-wing populism or to retreat from politics altogether, as Selbourne suggests.

Rustin's reduced expectations, pluralism, respect for universalist values, and his keen sense for political feasibility nevertheless give his vision a truly contemporary tone and a powerful appeal. If anyone could sell left-wing rather than right-wing populism to the new working class, Rustin could. Still, a stern eye must be cast on his proposals for putting the values to work in practice. Given his strictures on the *practical* (as well as ethical) failures of corporatism, he needed to be tougher on himself in assessing the administrative feasibility of his schemes.

For instance, Rustin criticizes liberal decentralism for its bias toward "those with the greater participatory resources and skills," yet his own ultraparticipatory society is let off rather easily on this score. He takes the "Workers' Plan movement" as a model for industrial democracy, but he admits that the movement has so far been confined to high-tech workers with unusual bargaining strength and technical expertise. He assures us that New Left intellectuals are much more practical and accessible than the Old Left (for instance, the Fabian) sort, but he admits that their chief successes have been theoretical, and that "this theoretical utility is still distinct from its restricted normative purchase in everyday political debate." This last phrase deserved to be blazoned at the top of every page instead of the usual running heads.

Rustin offers much that is valuable and attractive to those who have never been on the left at all, and he sketches out the terms of a new partnership between socialists and working people, evoking the spirit of the 1940s with the vocabulary of the 1980s. Though far from definitive, Rustin's book points a way forward for the left. □

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Paul Roazen

Whitewash

PSYCHOTHERAPY IN THE THIRD REICH: THE GÖRING INSTITUTE, by Geoffrey Cocks. London and New York: Oxford University Press. 326 pp. $24.95.

This is the worst book I have read in ages. Its central conceptual flaw can be detected in the title. The author believes that psychotherapy existed in Hitler's Germany. Just as students of jurisprudence have persuasively argued against the misuse of the word "law" in connection with the Third Reich, since everything "legal" was arbitrary and contrary to natural justice, so the term psychotherapy is misleading to those who want to understand what happened under Hitler.

The author lacks any real understanding of the ethical dimensions of what he purports to be writing about. He is fascinated by the degree of alleged professional institutionalization that so-called psychotherapists achieved under Hitler. Only when describing the link between the Göring Institute, headed by a cousin of Hermann Göring, and the SS, does Cocks comment: "To the extent that this history should include a degree of moral judgment, it must be said that these activities involved a higher degree of culpability in their contributions to Nazi projects." If indeed the author is correct in claiming that what he calls psychotherapy, in any shape or form, flourished under Hitler, and had its roots in pre-Nazi Germany and its continuity in the post-World War II Germanys, then Germany as a country and culture stands indicted anew. What we have then is no success story but the tale of a collapse of Western civilization.

The kindest way of treating passages in the book is to declare that their author is morally out to lunch. He is centrally concerned with the affairs of the Göring Institute, led by Dr. Matthias Göring, pretty much to the exclusion of old-line psychiatrists. A few choice quotations about Matthias Göring are in order. We are told that "it is difficult to gauge the degree of anti-Semitism in Göring," but that "his words and actions between 1933 and 1945 leave no doubt over his condemnatory public stance then toward Jewish influence in his profession." The author writes that Göring "did not join the Nazi party in order to exercise his anti-Semitism; he joined as part of a process of professional necessity and national-cultural loyalty." In 1933 and 1934 Göring made *Mein Kampf* required reading for all "psychotherapists." His relationship with his own deputy, Schultz, deteriorated

> to the point of rupture early in 1945 with Göring's insistence that they, as those in charge of a psychotherapeutic institute, serve as psychological advisers to the last German units defending Berlin against the Russian invaders. When Schultz refused and pointed to the futility of such an action, Göring branded him a defeatist and continued to badger him about it.

The author thinks that Göring's party membership "carried a certain degree of sincerity and conviction." The complex of motives in Göring's reviewing of Nazi books and articles was, we are informed, "typically human."

For reasons that are chilling in terms of the history of Western culture, earlier philosophic ideas, and in particular a Romantic tradition in German psychology, could be made use of by the Nazi regime. As one reflects on World War II and the fate of Western culture, it seems to me mistaken to assert the alleged "benefit to patients as well as to the evolving profession itself." I refuse to agree that "the composite of these beliefs, actions, inactions, choices, compromises, opportunisms, improprieties, and outrages presents a peculiarly human picture, devoid of either heroes or true villains." There were, in my opinion, no "major strides" in any features of this story.

One would be inclined to say something positive about the Notes in the back of the book, which do show that the author has read with zeal selected primary sources. But he maintains in an early citation that "as the history of the Göring Institute once again makes clear, Nazi Germany was not a perfect totalitarian order. . . ." The concept of totalitarianism may no longer have the respectability that it had in the late 1950s, but I cannot imagine anybody in the field ever having tried to prove "perfection" in how Hitler's Germany illustrated the type of system called totalitarianism. One holds one's head in despair at the malignant irony of the Nazi conviction that "mental disorder within the master race could not be genetic or essentially organic," and that therefore applied depth psychology had a special role to play in the Third Reich.

Only a small portion of this sorry tale has hitherto been widely known. The collaborative activities of Carl G. Jung, although early on condemned by a Swiss colleague as well as by Wilhelm Reich, have been weighed and assessed. The way Jung's ideas could be used to suit Nazi purposes is unfortunately only part of a much wider picture. It is not

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as broadly understood how Ernest Jones, one of Freud's most loyal lieutenants, also was able to work successfully with Matthias Göring. Nor are most people aware of Freud's authoritarian leanings in the last decade of his life. Freud's attitude toward Austrian politics in the 1930s was heartbreaking to his politically idealistic followers.

One bit of light emerges from the text to reassure us that there was a solitary sanity of resistance to Hitler's tyranny. A member of the Göring Institute, John Rittmeister, was arrested by the Gestapo (in late 1942) and accused of being part of an espionage plot that fed information to the Russians. Rittmeister had compromised the "integrity" of the Göring Institute and aroused "the patriotic wrath of the institute's director." On the charge of high treason Rittmeister was executed in 1943.

The author does not seem to recognize that the success of the Göring Institute and its part in helping the Luftwaffe and in promoting the war effort itself besmirch the whole tradition of German so-called psychotherapy. All of us should be wary of the implications of any system of ideas that aims to "harmonize" the individual and the dominant social order. However, a book arguing that psychoanalysis was "preserved through the departure of Jewish analysts and by the cover of the Göring name" is fatally flawed. And to the extent that German culture once represented some of the best in the Western tradition, the account this book gives is more ethically worrisome to me than the horror stories about the abuse of psychiatry under the Soviet regime.

Almost at the outset of the book the author informs us that "psychotherapists at the Göring Institute, of course, were not permitted to treat Jews. . . ." After he has made some formal bows in the obligatory direction of morality, the author states: "To treat Jews or to protest the Nazi dictum was to risk not only personal destruction but also destruction of the profession and practice of psychotherapy itself. And then what of the patients who needed treatment?"

The author does not understand that the Nazi regime destroyed psychotherapy as it should be known; and that the German practitioners of their craft owed an obligation to their patients, to humanity at large, and to the patients in countries that the Nazis assaulted. One suspects that only in a success-oriented culture like ours could an academic study of such a situation thrive into publication without encountering the most savage criticism reviewers could marshal. The notion of a "German psychotherapy" is, I think, on all fours with the concept of an "Aryan" physics. □

James P. Young

Socialism & Its Critics

THE POLITICS OF SOCIALISM, by John Dunn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 107 pp. Cloth, $29.95; paper, $8.95.

John Dunn's peculiar book purports to address two problems. The first is how to explain the attraction of socialism in advanced capitalist nations and the second whether socialism is "still a rational and civilizing form of political enterprise in these countries." The answer to the first is, as Dunn admits, not very original. The more clearly we come to see the nature of capitalist ownership, he argues, the less plausible it seems as a claim to material goods. And as the economic condition of the majority becomes "more confused and unstable," it is increasingly difficult for a representative democratic state to defend the power of the owners. Dunn also recognizes that competition does not occur on "fair and equal terms." We can, then, expect that socialism will be with us as a potential alternative for a long time to come. Dunn offers guidance for socialist politics under such conditions.

Though capitalist democracy is badly flawed, socialism, however, seems in substantially worse shape. Its political theory, Dunn claims, is a combination of "evasion, debility, and insight," its economic presumptions are "increasingly indefensible," and its politics in light of this fact is merely "frivolous"; in the end socialism is paralyzed "far more by its massive intellectual failures and its queasy honesty than by any diminution in the repulsiveness of capitalist society." Capitalist democracy emerges as the least bad of all possible worlds—a system well-adapted to the needs of a "society irritably but rationally aware of its own internal contradictions, but also irritably but rationally unconvinced of the possibility of transforming itself into a less contradictory form." If we take Dunn's attack on capitalism seriously, his book is a cry of despair. If we do not, it is little more than a Hayek for the '80s—more sophisticated, perhaps, because Dunn does not share Hayek's infatuation with laissez-faire and because he grudgingly, if inconsistently, concedes some of the successes of 20th-century social democratic politics.

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The Politics of Socialism is an amalgam of commonplace arguments dressed up as blinding revelations, caricatures of utopias, and repeated *diabolus-ex-machina* arguments in which the likes of Stalin lead us down the slippery slope to Soviet or Kampuchean totalitarianism. Such arguments had genuine force in the days of the Popular Front, but they have little bearing on the thinking of Western socialists today. Add to these three an unwillingness to confront ideas and movements (particularly when American) that run counter to his own arguments and an unbelievably clotted, overwrought style: the result is a dismaying performance from so powerful a thinker as Dunn.

DUNN PAYS LITTLE ATTENTION to the actual practice of social democratic politics. Had he looked more closely, he might have observed that social democracy is historically not the "road to serfdom"—it has not even been the road to socialism! Instead, it has led to mixed economies with more or less advanced welfare states. Dunn simply dismisses even the best of such systems. Sweden and still less Britain as the postwar Labour government made it have little claim on "human enthusiasm or commitment." But from the perspective of Ronald Reagan's America it can only be said that we are in need of more such "failures."

This incapacity to see the value or potential of social democratic reform is rooted, I think, in Dunn's deep hostility to the liberal political tradition and to socialism as a logical development of what is best in that tradition. Thus, in an earlier book, Dunn dismissed John Stuart Mill as merely "hapless," though Mill provides an important starting point for anyone concerned with the peaceful transition from liberalism to socialism. The theory developed in Mill's *Principles of Political Economy* suggests exactly the sort of institutional structure that would go far to meet Dunn's criticisms of socialist political economy. Mill's proposals for an egalitarian, market-oriented system of cooperatives operated under the control of the workers is very much in line with programs advocated by such theorists as Robert Dahl.

Dunn goes beyond misjudgment in his surprisingly unscholarly misuse of Alec Nove's *Economics of Feasible Socialism*. Nove's book is precisely what the title suggests and what Dunn contends does not exist—a politically responsible, economically sophisticated discussion of how a democratic socialist regime might work. Ignoring this, Dunn cites Nove's severe and well-taken critique of Soviet economics and generalizes it into an assault on the economic plausibility of socialism *tout court*. This is a willful and disastrous misreading because Nove's work—especially when linked, as it can be, to Millian liberalism and the new interest in economic democracy—does indeed provide a useful foundation for a social democratic program. Dunn ignores these materials; they do not fit his preconceived notion of socialism as a utopian attempt to impose centralized, bureaucratic control over recalcitrant human beings to bring their behavior "briskly into line with the demands of our moral intuitions."

Underlying these strained arguments are two further failures. The first follows from Dunn's tendency to see political messianism everywhere. Dunn notes an alternative strain in socialist thought running from Eduard Bernstein to Anthony Crosland, but he is unable to keep it in focus long enough to explore its possibilities. Thus he misses the significance of Bernstein's perhaps overstated maxim that the movement is everything, the goal nothing. In this view politics is anything but utopian; it is instead a never-ending process without claim to provide definitive solutions for all problems.

Closely related is Dunn's tendency to expect too much from philosophy and not enough from democratic politics. While deriding utopianism, Dunn rather inconsistently seems to long for "knockdown" philosophical arguments. Thus he laments the absence of a socialist equivalent to *A Theory of Justice* by John Rawls. But though this is no part of Rawls's intention, such definitive arguments are the sort most likely to preempt democratic politics. In a democracy, no political theory can provide a once-and-for-all solution to all social problems. Each successive theory is simply, though perhaps importantly, a contribution to the ongoing political debate intended to recommend a general approach to a particular situation.

Dunn's argument relies heavily on straw men and simply fails to consider significant parts of the theory and practice of recent Western socialism. These are difficult times for the democratic left, but not least for that reason there is much to be done. The ideas are there in the theories of such writers as Dahl and Nove and in the more programmatic efforts of Robert Kuttner, Michael Harrington, and many others, as well as in the growth of the flawed but interesting movement for economic democracy and workers' control. Even the short-term agenda of repairing the welfare state and seeking more control of the large corporation is not easy to achieve, but it is hardly utopian to try. □

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LETTERS

Correction

Editors:

I much enjoyed your Winter 1986 issue. Could you publish a minor correction in your next issue?

Barbara Reisman co-authored "The Case for Adversarial Unionism," *Harvard Business Review*, May-June 1985, p. 22, referred to in Robert Kuttner's "Unions, Economic Power and the State," *Dissent*, Winter 1986, p. 39. Her name was misspelled there.

LANCE COMPA
Washington, D.C.

Vietnam Revisited

The following letter was sent to the editors of Dissent *by a friend who works part-time for the magazine.*

Editors:

I'm writing to register my disagreement with your article "Were We Wrong About Vietnam?" (*Dissent*, Fall 1985).

You contrast your own position on the Vietnam War with three other positions within the antiwar movement:

1. "The victory of Hanoi and the Viet Cong was desirable because it would further the 'progressive cause' (that is, communism)." Citing the authoritarianism and the ruthlessness of the Vietnamese Communists, you find this position morally unacceptable.

2. "The war was morally wrong, since American intervention constituted an effort by a great power to impose its imperial will upon a people that had long been struggling to determine its own fate." You comment that there is "much truth in this position," but you nevertheless find it insufficient, primarily because nonintervention, though an "important moral principle," is probably not an "absolute principle."

3. "Whatever the original rationale for intervening in Vietnam," the "costs" of the war were too great to justify continuing it. Most of the people who opposed the war on this basis, you comment, came to oppose it "somewhat tardily."

In characterizing your own position, you begin with a brief analysis of the war, stressing that Hanoi and the NLF "unfortunately had succeeded in appropriating the historic energies of Vietnamese nationalism." You then present your own reasons for opposing the war: "It became highly unlikely, therefore, that the war could be 'won'; or that 'our' side could seriously be said to be fighting for freedom; or that the majority of Vietnamese supported either the Saigon government or American intervention." You add that "This political analysis, merely sketched here, lent weight and cogency to the moral and pragmatic arguments against the war. . . ."

To make my objection clear, I'll use an obvious parallel. How would we respond to a Russian critic of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan who justified his position in the same terms? "It is highly unlikely that the war can be 'won'; or that 'our' side can seriously be said to be fighting for freedom; or that the majority of Afghans support either the Kabul government or Soviet intervention."

We would not find this untrue, but we would find it . . . unsatisfying. (Certainly, if we look through back issues of *Dissent* for criticisms of the Soviet invasion, we won't find any that are based on such cautious reasoning.) We would be much more satisfied by an objection much more succinct: that no nation has the right to intervene in the domestic affairs of another by military force.

If confronted with this view, the cautious critic of the Soviet invasion could respond with the same point that you made in response to Argument Number Two, the moral argument: he could suggest that nonintervention, though an important principle, may not be an "absolute" principle.

And again, we would find this true, but not compelling. Of course we can all imagine situations in which intervention might be justified—examples of what you, Michael, have called "humanitarian intervention." But it would be easy to show that the invasion of Vietnam, like the invasion of Afghanistan, was not one of these rare cases. And if this is so, the fact that nonintervention is not an "absolute principle" is irrelevant. The general rule that intervention is wrong holds good in this case; the moral argument against the war is valid.

It is also commendably clear—more so than your own. In basing your own opposition to the war in part on the "pragmatic" argument that it was "highly unlikely . . . that the war could be 'won,' " and in saying that the moral argument by itself was insufficient to justify opposition to the war, you leave room for a disturbing inference. You allow the reader to infer that you think the war might have been worthy of support if we had been more likely to win it.

One last comment. More than once you refer to the brutality of the Vietnamese Communists. You suggest that this weakens somewhat the moral case against U.S. intervention: "If the methods used by the United States were what troubled opponents of the war, then what would these opponents make of the methods used by the other side?" And later you write that "Those of us who opposed American intervention yet did not want a Communist victory were in the difficult position of having no happy ending to offer. . . . And we were in the difficult position of urging a relatively complex argument at a moment when most Americans, pro- and antiwar, wanted blinding simplicities."

Again, the situation in Afghanistan is comparable. The Afghan tribesmen, by many accounts, are ex-

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tremely brutal. The society they are seeking to preserve is marked by tribal warfare and religious fanaticism. One can hardly expect that a Soviet withdrawal will bring about a "happy ending." But does this stop any of us from urging, in the bluntest and simplest terms, that the Soviet Union withdraw from Afghanistan?

Not every simple argument is simplistic. The Vietnam war was wrong because military intervention is wrong: this simple argument, in my opinion, is stronger than your own.

Postscript: A day or two after I wrote the foregoing, I began to experience the slight headaches that are a sure sign that an article one had thought completed needs more work. In what follows I will criticize your analysis of the character of the war and your remarks about some of the war's domestic opponents.

Brief as it is, your analysis of the war is seriously flawed. You write that it "was partly an inherited colonial war, with the U.S. taking over from France; partly a civil war between two Vietnamese camps; and partly a battleground in the worldwide conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union"—as if it were a little bit of each.

A colonial war, yes. But a battleground in a worldwide conflict? If the Vietnamese have proved nothing else in the last 40 years, they've proved how attached they are to their independence. Obviously the Soviet Union supplied economic and military aid to Hanoi, but its involvement was minimal compared with that of the U.S. The war was a conflict between the superpowers only in the sense in which Afghanistan is today.

Nor was the conflict a "civil war" in any but the most marginal sense. The Geneva conference of 1954 established a cease-fire between the Vietminh and the French—no State of South Vietnam was involved—and called for national elections to determine the country's future. After the conference, Ngo Dinh Diem, newly installed as prime minister of South Vietnam, made it clear that there would be no elections. Whether or not this decision had been dictated by his U.S. backers, it plainly had their approval. Eisenhower had estimated that if elections were held, Ho Chi Minh would win 80 percent of the vote; as a State Department internal memo observed, Diem would be campaigning "against the knowledge, shared even by illiterate coolies, that there would be no such independence as now exists had it not been for the Vietminh." There *were* significant forces in South Vietnam that opposed the Vietminh—but most of them also opposed the Saigon government.

At times you acknowledge all this, as when you write that "Communist leadership of Vietnamese nationalism was the single decisive factor of recent Vietnamese history." But your language keeps slipping back to an assumption of symmetry, as when you describe the war as a "struggle between a totalitarian government (Hanoi) . . . and an authoritarian government (Saigon)," or when you say that "We were right in refusing to give credence either to Saigon or Hanoi, in refusing to support the imperial backers of both." I'm not saying that you *should* have supported either side; but the "evenhandedness" of formulations like these, which seems to suggest that both sides were equally to blame for the war, is seriously misleading.

You, Irving, have often written of the dangers of ideology. But anticommunism can be an ideology like any other, and more than once it leads you to put your thumb on the scale. You write that "The consequences of the Communist victory, as some of us did suggest a decade ago, have been dreadful. Only fellow travelers and fools would deny that." I'll leave it for you to decide which description fits me best—for I can't help wondering whether the dreadfulness of Vietnam today is a consequence of the Communist victory alone. Perhaps Vietnam would be a bit different today if we had allowed the 1956 elections to take place. Or if we'd responded to any of the eight letters Ho Chi Minh sent to Truman in 1945 and 1946, in which he asked the U.S. to help mediate between the Vietminh and the French. I have no assurance that Vietnam would have found a "happy ending" even if one of these fairy-tale scripts had been followed. But can *you* be sure that the condition of Vietnam today owes everything to the harshness of the Communists, nothing at all to thirty years of war?

Finally, I want to say a word in defense of the "large number of New Leftists" who wished for the victory of the Communists. They did so, you write, because they believed that "only a left-authoritarian government could be both revolutionary and ruthless enough to cope with the problems of the Third World," or because they were "swept away by sentiment and indignation." You consider no other explanation.

I can think of one. I think that many of these New Leftists simply believed that since most of the Vietnamese people supported the Communists, the Communists deserved to win the war.

I agree with you that some young Americans romanticized Hanoi and the NLF naively. But I don't think they merit your contempt. They saw their own country murdering over a million people, and they sympathized with our victims and with those who opposed us. Compared to those who planned the war and those who sought to justify it, these New Leftists, whatever their shortcomings, were models of moral clarity.

BRIAN MORTON
Hoboken, N.J.

MICHAEL WALZER Replies:

I don't much want, in 1986, to refight the Vietnamese war, but Brian Morton's thoughtful letter both deserves and requires an answer. I will try to answer by taking up his analogy and talking mostly about Afghanistan.

It is not right to argue that the only justified interventions are "humanitarian interventions" (the Indians, say, in Bangladesh). As I tried to show in *Just and Unjust Wars,* counter-interventions can also be justi-

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fied: the French and British would surely have done the right thing, for example, had they helped the Spanish republicans. But claims about interventions and counter-interventions, under modern conditions, are complex political claims. They require an analysis of the character and relative legitimacy of the local regime (or of the insurrectionary movement). What kind of popular support does it have? How dependent is it on outside assistance? What would the political situation look like if no one were interfering?

So, if I were a Russian dissident opposed to the Afghan intervention, I would feel myself bound to argue that the Communist regime in Kabul did not have popular support, that it would quickly collapse were it not for the Russian presence—and also that the resistance was, by contrast, genuinely popular and not dependent for its very existence on American supplies (or military advisers or trainers) or on Pakistani sanctuaries. Simply to oppose the intervention, without saying anything about the politics of the case, would not be to adopt a firm moral position but only to strike a pretty pose: and that is not what I would want to do. At the same time, I would also feel myself bound to acknowledge that the resistance, which would surely win were Russian troops to be withdrawn, would in all probability reestablish a society marked, as Morton says, "by tribal warfare and religious fanaticism." I would not repress this knowledge and pretend, on the basis, perhaps, of a heroic journey to the guerrilla strongholds, that the new Afghanistan would be a liberal or social democratic paradise. Given my abhorrence of warfare and fanaticism, I don't think I could bring myself to say that the guerrillas "deserved" to win. It would be enough if I insisted that they could not rightly be opposed by force. On the other hand, were the Communist regime genuinely popular and the resistance largely an American project, I probably would not oppose the intervention at all (though as a dissident in a communist state, I wouldn't be happy about that either).

In other words, I would oppose the Russian intervention in Afghanistan *from inside Russia* in the same way as Irving Howe and I opposed the American intervention in Vietnam from inside America. Would Brian Morton really want anything to be different in this hypothetical story?

In fact, of course, the analogy is not exact, and our opposition to the Vietnam War was in one sense different from the opposition to the Afghan War in my story. For if I were a Russian dissident, I would not only oppose the war but also the regime; I woud deny the legitimacy of the Soviet state. And so, whether or not I thought the guerrillas "deserved" to win, I might well hope for a Russian defeat. Irving Howe and I did not hope for an American defeat in Vietnam. But I suspect that many of those who did thought of themselves as opposed to the American regime, that is, to liberal democracy. Morton's letter misses the mood of the time, the unearned despair with "Amerika," the excitement over guerrilla and terrorist violence, the willful projection of ideological certainties (naive enthusiasms too) onto the great unknown called the Third World. If contempt wasn't necessarily the right response to all this, criticism certainly was.

And still is, for similar views have reappeared, here and now, in the form of an admiration, certainly undue, for the government of Nicaragua and the rebels in El Salvador. Our first response, in *Dissent,* has been . . . political analysis—as in Abe Brumberg's articles on Nicaraguan politics and Gabriel Zaid's on the Salvadoran guerrillas. Neither of these writers is a supporter of American intervention. Instead, they point us toward the same sort of complex and ambiguous political/moral position as the one we defended, not with any great success, twenty years ago. I suspect that Brian Morton shares this position; I hope to be around to see how he writes about it twenty years hence.

Irving Howe Adds:

Why, especially toward the end of the Vietnam War, did people like Michael Walzer and me stress that the war could not be won by the U.S. except through human and political costs that would be too great? Because we wanted—not just to convince people that our analysis of Vietnam was "correct" but—to help bring the war to a quick end. By then there were a good many Americans who didn't have a principled opposition to the war but who had become weary of it, or convinced it was a losing proposition; hence, a "pragmatic" appeal to these people might strengthen the forces of opposition. In politics, you often want people to act together out of varying opinions and motives. Which didn't at all keep us from advancing our own views about Vietnam.

Brian Morton says that many New Leftists supported the Vietnamese Communists not because they wanted a victory for communism but because they "believed that since most of the Vietnamese people supported the Communists, the Communists deserved to win the war." A dangerous argument. First: if many New Leftists did think as Morton says, that was partly because they had been persuaded that the Vietnamese Communists were somehow "progressive," or "different" from those in other countries, and therefore more deserving of support both at home and abroad. Second, we don't really know, nor did the New Leftists, what "most" of the Vietnamese people felt. They had no opportunity to express themselves through democratic means. What did seem clear—quite another matter—was that the Communists had the most ardent and devoted cadres. Third, even if the Communists did have the support of "most" Vietnamese, that didn't make their cause a good one or support of them politically desirable. It's not hard to think of quite a few repellent regimes in our century that have had the support of "most" or many of their people.

As for "contempt" for the New Left: well, I was a greater sinner than Walzer in this respect and will have to speak for myself. Try to understand how people like

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me were driven to exasperation and then despair during those years. We wanted to get the war ended. We felt the antiwar movement was being derailed by those who wanted to make the struggle against the war an equivalent to victory for Hanoi, which would destroy the chance of winning the support of many Americans who had become skeptical about the war. And given what we anticipated would be the results of a Communist victory—since confirmed, alas, in Vietnam and Cambodia—we also kept saying that the excesses of some New Leftists were preparing the ground for a large-scale right-wing reaction in the U.S. Were we wrong?□

Progressive Counter Offensive

Editors:

The Institute for American Values, a newly formed public policy organization based in New York, is putting together a "Talent Bank" of progressive scholars from around the country. The purpose of the Talent Bank is to link the community of progressive scholars more closely to the worlds of public policymaking and political organizing. It will also serve as a publications clearinghouse and a vehicle for cooperative work and resource-sharing.

The current conservative ascendancy owes much to the fact that, since the early 1970's, the right has dramatically increased its investment in the organization, production and marketing of ideas. Last year, for example, we identified thirteen liberal/progressive multi-issue think tanks with combined budgets totaling under $15.7 million. By contrast, we found thirty-one explicity conservative/anti-liberal institutes whose combined budgets exceeded $72 million.

If you are interested in joining a "counter-offensive" that will bring progressive scholarship more directly to bear on policy making, opinion making, and organizing, let us hear from you: Institute for American Values, 250 West 57th Street, Suite 2415, New York, NY 10107; (212) 246-3942.

David Blankenhorn
Co-Director, Institute for
American Values □

Rank-and-file Struggles

Editors:

An assessment of the 50 years of the CIO is the order of the day, as suggested in your Fall 1985 issue and in the article by David Brody, "The CIO After 50 Years: A Historical Reckoning."

Brody bases many of his conclusions about the future of industrial unionism on Peter Friedlander's oral history study of UAW Local 222—"a minor auto-parts plant" (p. 466). When Professor Brody does not find a rank-and-file history of industrial unionism in this account of UAW Local 222 (or in the work by other labor historians), he contends that it doesn't exist. Surveying what he calls the "New Left historians," Brody maintains that they didn't demonstrate "the existence of any rank-and-file conception of an alternative . . . to the liberal conception of industrial-union history" (p. 470). Hence he argues that a progressive rank and file doesn't exist, or at least didn't play any significant role in the development of industrial unionism.

This reasoning ignores that the historiography of the American working class functions within a framework of a management-controlled publishing industry. There is substantial documentation of the shop-floor struggles necessary to build the UAW, but mention of these struggles is barred from any but local publication in shop newspapers of local unions. For example, the Flint sit-down strikers went on to take up the fight for cost-of-living, pensions, against dues increases, for a shop-steward system, freedom of the press, and autonomy and democracy in their local and international union. These struggles are carefully documented in the local Flint labor press of the period. Gains like seniority were fought for and won by workers as a necessary defense against management's system of privileges and favoritism. A pioneer of the Flint sit-down strike, writing in the 1950s, recalled the reasons for the 1937 strike:

> The GM workers had been under tyrannical domination of company policy for so long that we were desperate.
>
> You had no job assurance, no seniority, no grievance procedure, and a lot of other objectionable employment conditions to contend with that only made a human wreck of you.
>
> The conditions became so intolerable that we had to do something to alleviate the tyranny. So the workers formed a union . . . and after a hard, bloody, sacrificial struggle [it] was recognized as the true bargaining agent for us—the UAW. . . . But the workers through their union won these concessions, don't ever think they were granted because of the Christian benevolence of the boss class.
>
> — Bert Boone, "Union Recognition," an article in *Searchlight*, February 11, 1959, p. 1

Primary-source documents like this are ignored by historical journals, and their existence is thereby denied. For example, when a prominent labor historian was asked for advice on getting such material published, he wrote that he was not familiar with any scholarly journal that would publish an article documenting the history recorded in a local union newspaper. He doubted any labor-history journal would find such material of sufficient interest to its readers to merit publication. Journals and publishers refuse to publish the history of rank-and-file struggles. Then scholars like David Brody claim such material doesn't exist, and that the progressive working class doesn't exist.

The large-scale industry, which made the CIO possible, is by no means extinct in the U.S. Neither is the industrial unionism that it makes necessary and possi-

(Continued on p. 256)

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LETTERS

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ble. The heroic 50-year history of the CIO has been shrouded in darkness. But the Spirit of '37 lives on—in the contradictions of speed-up, long hours of work for some and unemployment for others, which accompany technological advancement under capitalism.

RONDA HAUBEN
Dearborn, Michigan

DAVID BRODY Replies

Ms. Hauben seems to have misread my essay. Labor historians have never argued that rank-and-file activity did not exist or play a significant role in industrial-union development. What they have argued about is whether that activity might have led to a different kind of labor movement. That is, did the rank-and-file movements of the 1930s have in mind alternatives that might have protected shop-floor power from the formal bargaining system that ultimately prevailed? The *Searchlight* extract which Ms. Hauben brandishes in fact only bears out the conclusion that at the time this was not a concern of the Flint strikers—witness the demands for seniority and grievance procedures, which are at the heart of our contractual system. As for her belief that rank-and-file history has been suppressed, it seems to me that the citations in my essay to journals and publishers—mainstream as well as radical—provide a sufficient answer. □

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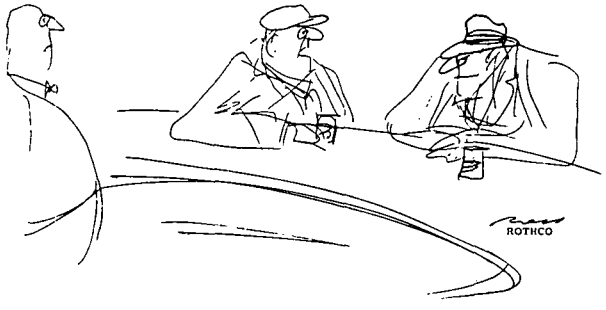

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